Rambert triumphs in America

Dance and Dancers

SEPTEMBER 1959

This month's full ballet guide

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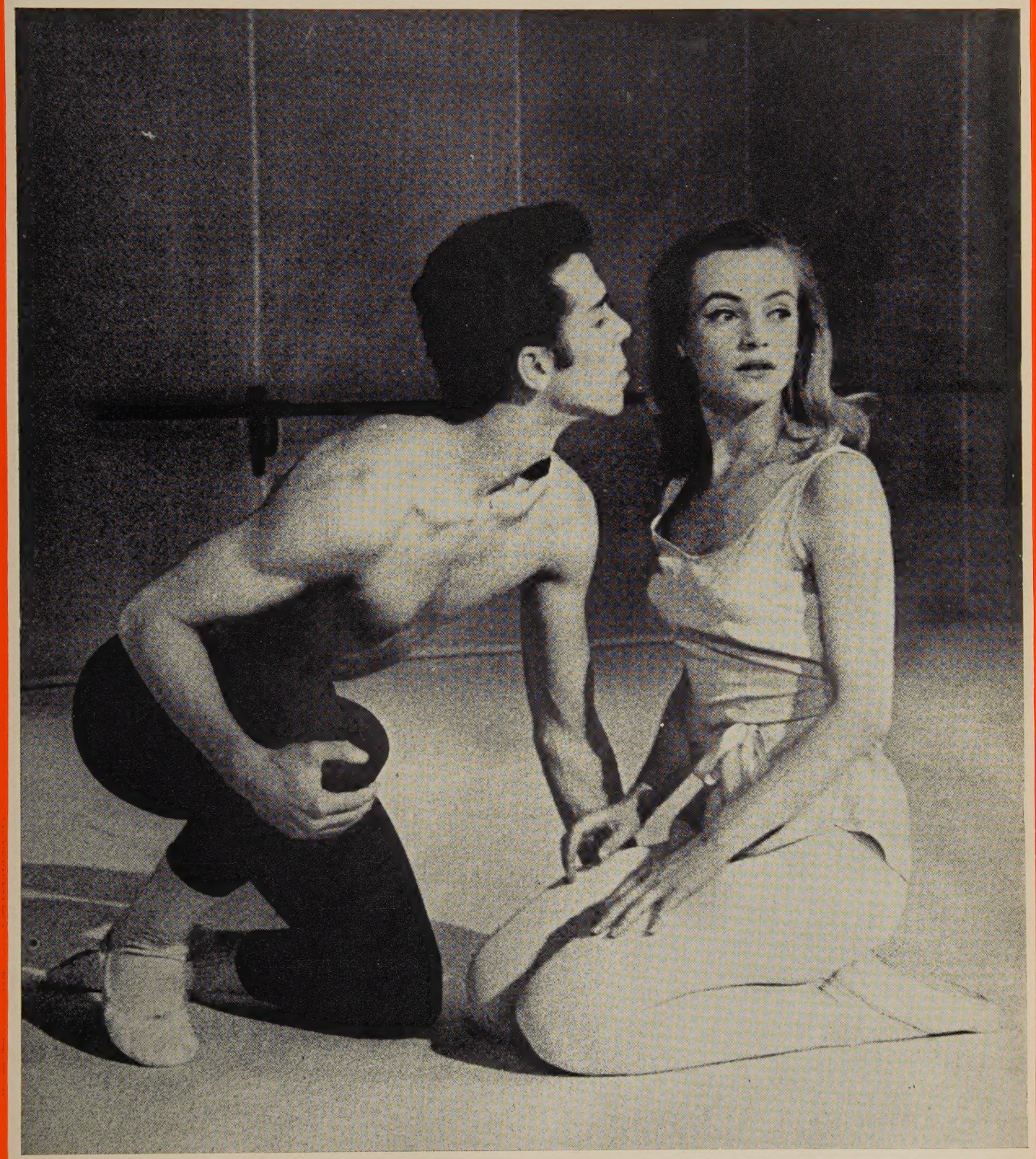

JAY NORMAN and WILMA CURLEY

of Jerome Robbins' Ballets: U.S.A., in *Afternoon of a Faun* at the Edinburgh Festival and in London

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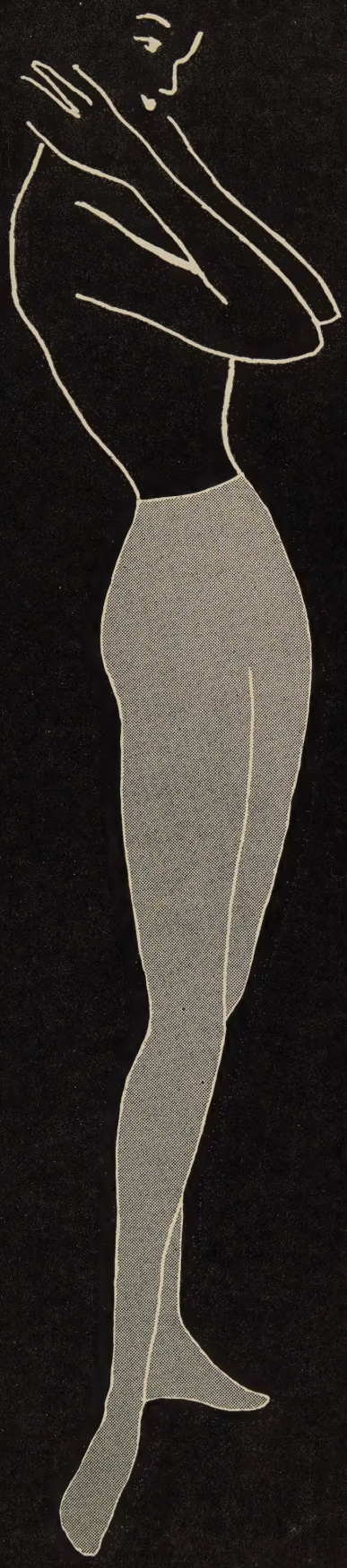

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		7 MON	Symphony for Fun Giselle (Chauvire, Gilpin)

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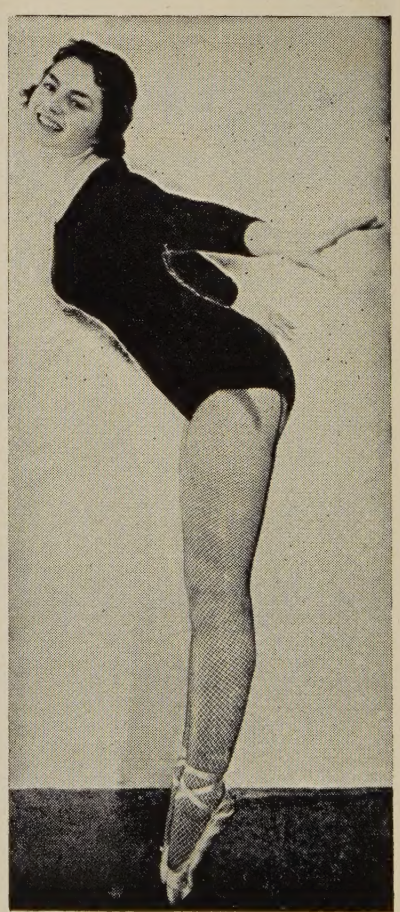
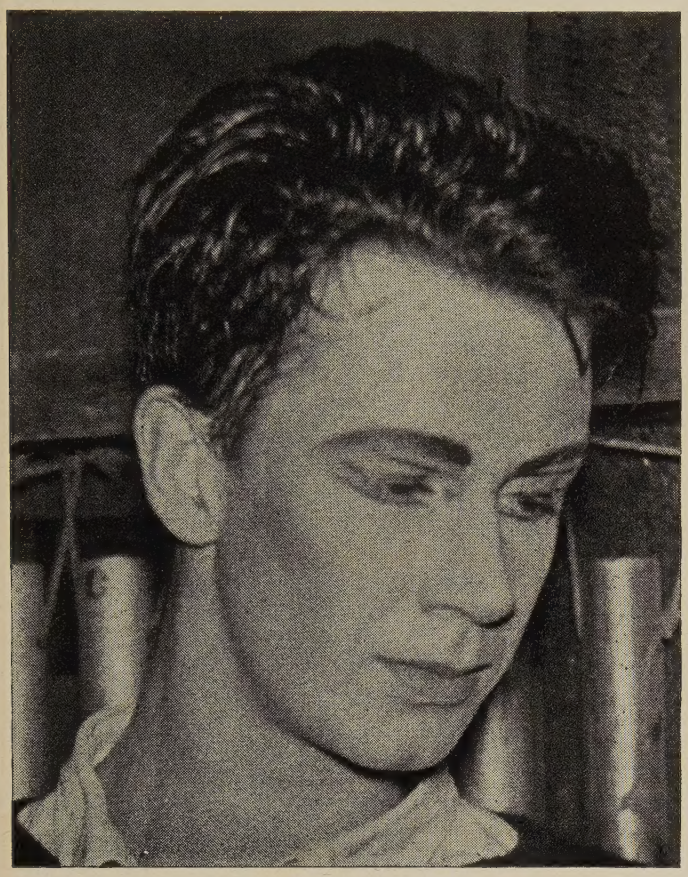


Personality of the Month



NORMAN MORRICE

AMONG the many plaudits collected by the Ballet Rambert during its first American appearance at Jacob's Pillow, some of the warmest were those given to the young choreographer Norman Morrice for his ballet *Two Brothers*. Born in Mexico of British parents, Morrice trained at the Rambert School and has been with the company for five or six years. He never made any great impression as a dancer until the company took the full-length *Coppélia* into their repertory, and he enjoyed a very considerable success as Dr. Coppélius, this being the first sign that there was anything particularly original about his talents. The news that he was to create a ballet for the company caused a few raised eyebrows but very little interest. Yet after the curtain had fallen on the first London performance of *Two Brothers,* and Morrice himself, a slight figure in sweater and jeans, stood taking call after call, few people in the theatre were in any doubt that they had seen the unveiling of an unusual choreographic talent. The date was September 15, 1958.

This year his second ballet, *Hazaña,* had its première, also at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, yet on that occasion the atmosphere was full of expectancy, as people wondered whether he would be able to repeat his earlier success. And once more he pulled it off, indicating that *Two Brothers* was not just a flash in the pan. He was well on the way to becoming one of the few British choreographers to establish themselves since the war.

Morrice's importance to British ballet is his involvement with people and his sense of drama, which are allied to musical sensitivity and an unusually promising grasp of dance invention. But he is equally important to the Ballet Rambert, for here for the first time in years they have the promise of a major choreographer in their own ranks.

SEPTEMBER 1959 10th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 10 No. 9

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor: E. C. MASON
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Transatlantic Recognition

OF course it was right that Marie Rambert should take her company to America. Over there they have always appreciated the ballet companies of Great Britain and welcomed them, but they had never seen the source from which so much of it sprang. It was difficult, though, to know just how she could be presented with her company and at what place. The Metropolitan Opera House, in New York, is such an obvious setting-off point, yet it was far too big for a company of the size which Rambert has always had. Apparently it had been the ambition for many years of Ted Shawn, great American dancer and director of the Jacob's Pillow festival, to bring Rambert to America, and he worked hard to realise his dream. After several years of negotiation he brought it off this summer and now yet another British company has triumphed on American soil. Critics and dancers of note came from all parts of the United States to Jacob's Pillow, the famous summer theatre in the Berkshire Hills, in order to see Rambert herself and the company which has, for almost thirty years, meant so much to ballet.

In an English summer when our bodies have enjoyed continual external warmth for a longer period than for many years, one of the most heart-warming events has been to read of praise for Rambert from the American critics. Each and every one appears to have gone to infinite pains to understand her, what she stands for and her very special place in ballet history. Not that Rambert is difficult to understand because she is as great a producer of herself as she is of the wonderful ballets she has given to the world, but it is encouraging when critics take the trouble to delve into the past rather than blindly accepting or dismissing what they see before their eyes. A great deal of credit is due to Ted Shawn for the manner in which he prepared the way by mailing news-sheets to the press for several months in advance. One only wishes that British managements would take a lesson from him when they are presenting foreign companies. Altogether Rambert and her company could not have been presented to America in a more fitting environment nor could the great instigator herself have been fêted in a way more suited to her remarkable personality.

But none of this is more than is due to her. Possibly it might make more people in this country a little more aware of the fact that Rambert has not always received recognition for the immense contribution she has made to the rise of British ballet, a contribution that has been felt by companies whose origin lies far away from these ocean-washed shores.

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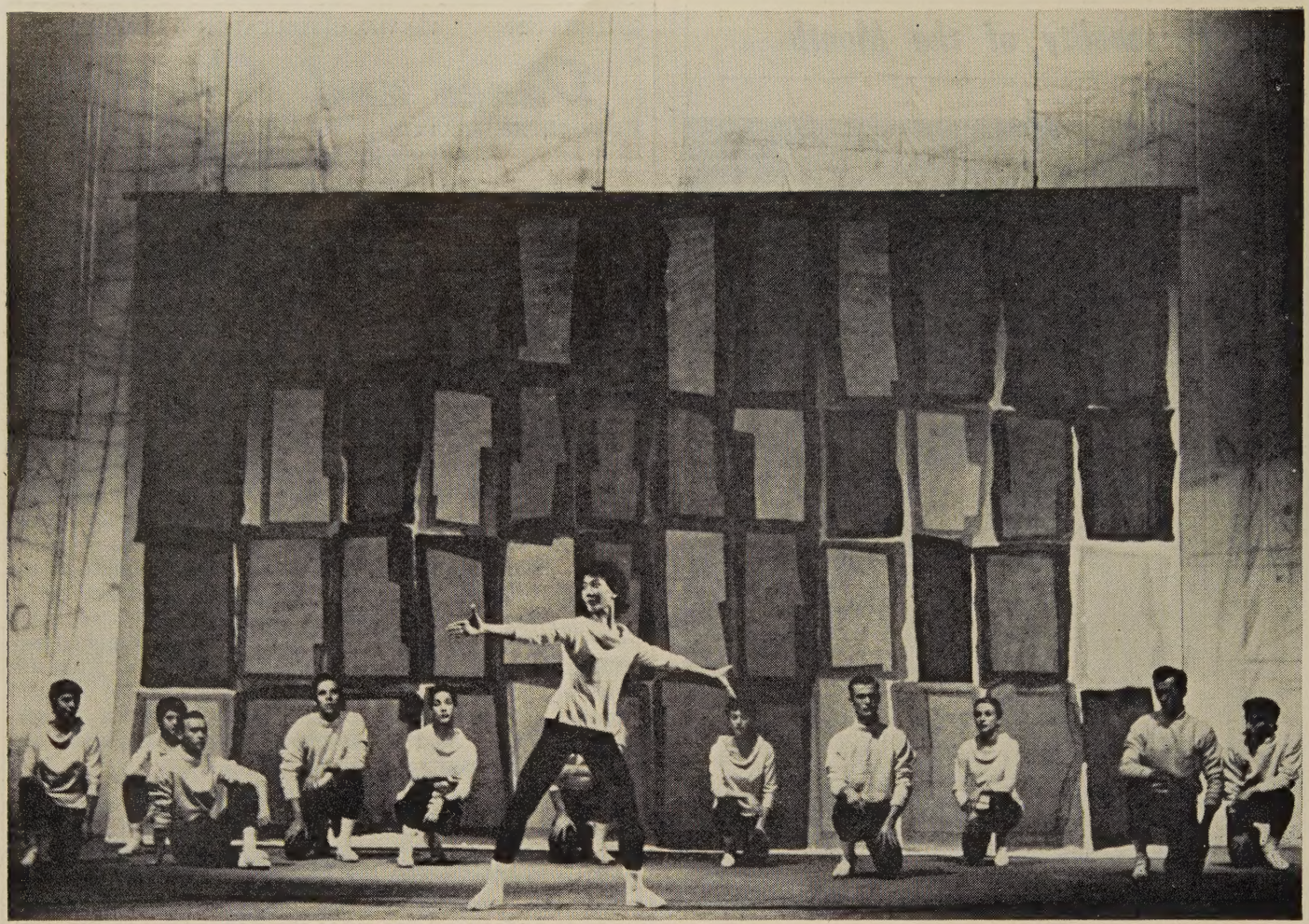


N.Y. EXPORT: OPUS JAZZ : *A scene from the Jerome Robbins ballet which had such a success during Ballets: U.S.A.'s Spoleto Festival and subsequent tour last year. This work will be seen this year for the first time in Britain at the Edinburgh Festival and also at the Piccadilly Theatre in London.*

Vistors to Edinburgh and London : 1

Ballets : U.S.A.

IN 1958, a small town near Rome announced that it was going to give a Festival of Two Worlds. A rather ambitious name it seemed, for a festival in a place like Spoleto. But like so many events in small communities, something significant arose which far outstripped in importance the original idea and environment. In two years the Spoleto festival has risen to become one of Europe's foremost festivals. A lot of this is due to Jerome Robbins' Ballets: U.S.A., which had its birth there and has since toured two continents in a blaze of triumph.

This is not entirely surprising as success has dogged Robbins' heels almost continually since he mounted his ballet, *Fancy Free,* for Ballet Theatre during the war. Almost everything he touches — whether it be a ballet or a musical production — seems doomed to success. Even his few failures have been magnificent ones. The reason for this is that he has one of the most original minds in show business and, what is even more important, he is so professional that he makes his ideas succeed triumphantly in the theatre. He is such a perfectionist that it took him two years to finish his recent musical, *West Side Story,* for which he was responsible with regard to story, production, choreography and cast-choosing.

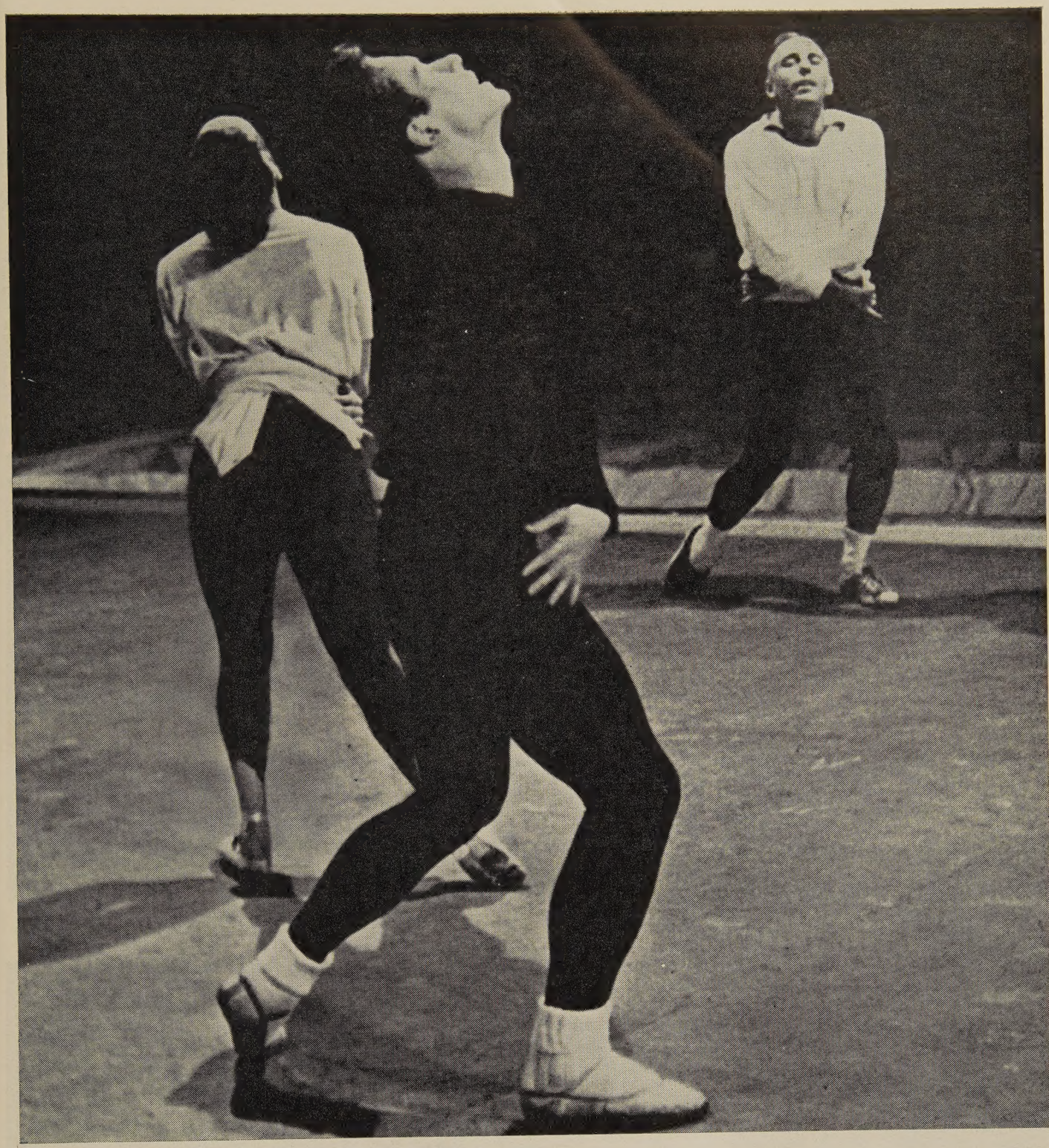
For his Ballets: U.S.A., Robbins auditioned many hundreds of dancers in order to get the eight girls and eight boys which he required. Each of the 16 dancers had to be a soloist and equally accomplished in both classical ballet and in contemporary jazz technique. Eventually he found the group that he wanted and they opened in Spoleto. The idea was to bring a variety of typically American dance styles to Europe.

The original intention had been for the group to be formed only for the Festival of Two Worlds, apart from the Brussels World Fair, but such was the success that it played other dates in Europe and later in America.

This year the company re-formed for a second visit to Spoleto and for a very long European tour culminating in the Edinburgh Festival and a short London engagement. The trail of success and rave notices which already follow in the wake of the company would make it appear that the future of Ballets: U.S.A. is assured and that it will become a permanent company.

The company gives one programme consisting of four works all by Jerome Robbins. Three of these remain from last year's repertory — *The Afternoon of a Faun, The Concert* and *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz.* The first is a contemporary version of the Mallarmé poem upon which Nijinsky based his ballet to Debussy music. It is a *pas de deux* which takes place in a classroom and concerns the awakening emotions of the two protagonists. *The Concert* is concerned with the reactions and the mental images which form in the minds of concert-goers while they listen to different pieces of Chopin music. *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz* is an abstract work using the various movements, complex rhythms, relationships and atmospheres that are found in contemporary dance and jazz. This latter work, with its Ben Shahn décors, has received the most praise to date.

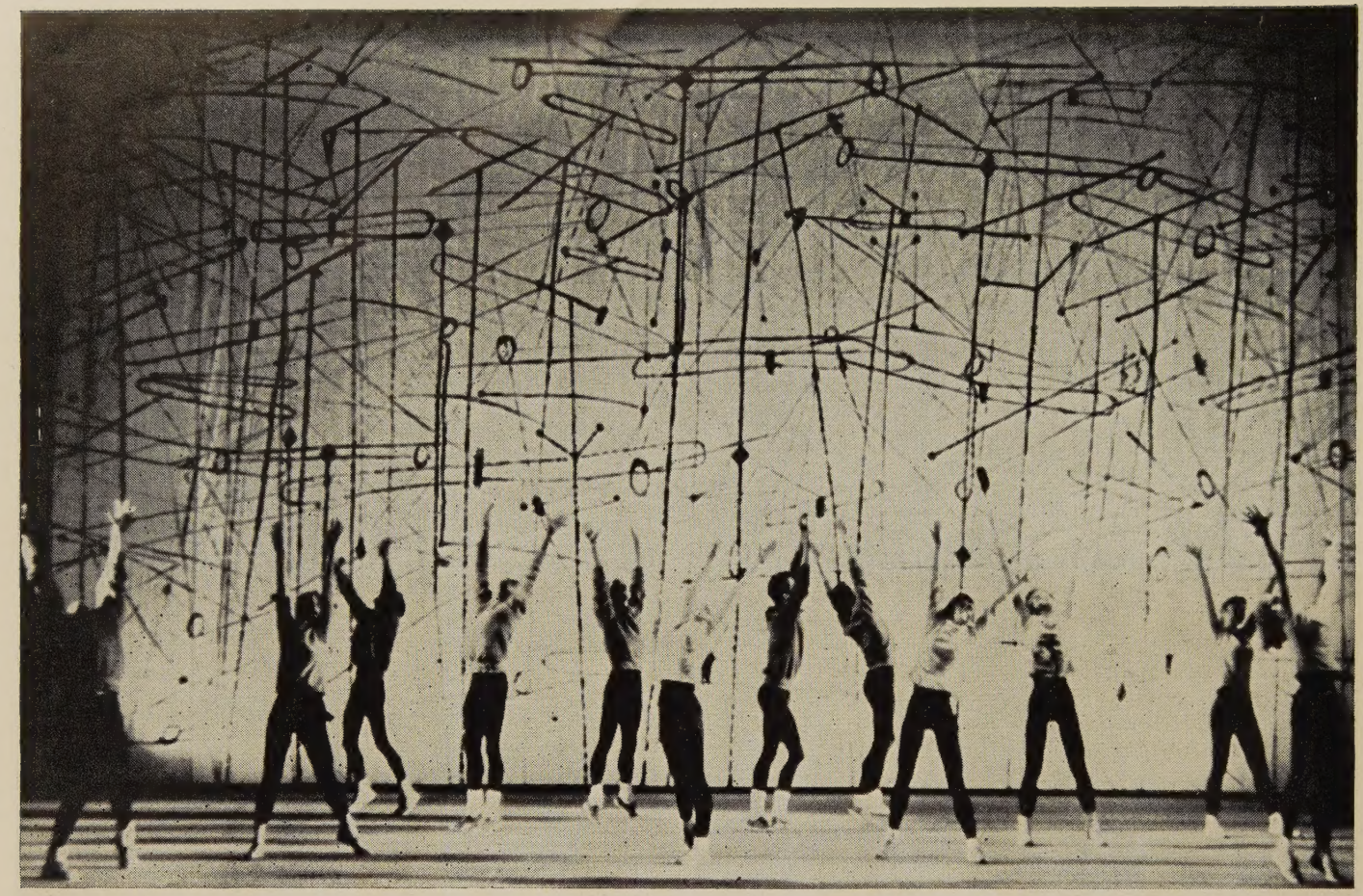
It was originally intended that Robbins should create a work to Aaron Copland music for this year's tour. The score was composed but owing to Robbins' many commitments — which included the production of the recent Broadway musical hit, *Gypsy* — he was unable to get on with the choreography. In its place he created a work — *Moves* — to no music at all. This idea, though not entirely original, as David Lichine made *Création* for Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées without music some years ago, is nevertheless an interesting one. Robbins believes that music guides the audience's



ROBBINS REHEARSES: Jerome Robbins, top right, is seen rehearsing his dancers preparatory to leaving America for their second European tour. Originally this tour was to have included a visit to Russia, when they would have been the first American company to do so, but at the last moment it was postponed.

response to actions on the stage and he feels that by severing that guidance the audience will respond solely to the action of the dance. Thus each movement and gesture will take on a new importance.

Although the company and its repertory is American, Robbins does not want people to feel that they are going to see "Americana" in terms of folklore. He wants to show how dance, as it was originally imported to the States, has been completely influenced and drastically changed by the American way of life, and the indigenous culture that has now grown up. In other words, Ballets: U.S.A. is probably the first real American company, reflecting national vitality in movement, influenced by Europe but still taking on a colour of its own.



AMERICAN DANCERS IN MOVEMENT : Two more pictures from N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz *showing members of Ballets: U.S.A. at work. The five settings of this Robbins' ballet have been designed by the distinguished modern American painter Ben Shahn. The company has enjoyed an enormous success in Europe and America and its first visit to Britain is awaited with great eagerness.*
Photos : Martha Swope.

Visitors to Edinburgh : 2

Finnish National Ballet

FOR the first time in history a ballet company from Finland will be dancing in Great Britain when the Finnish National Ballet plays in Edinburgh during the second week of this year's festival.

During the week they will give three different programmes, one their recent production of *Giselle,* which has been closely modelled on the Bolshoi production. It was taken into the repertory last winter and is generally considered to be one of the most successful works given by the National Ballet. Leonide Lavrovsky came from Moscow to produce it and Paul Suominen's designs, as used by the Bolshoi, have been followed closely. The title rôle was originally created by Doris Laine, while Klaus Salin was Albert and Margareta Von Bahr played Myrtha. Since then other prima ballerinas have taken over the principal rôle in turns.

The second programme will include a revival of Mozart's *L'Epreuve d'Amour.* It has not been seen in England since before the war when Michael Fokine created it for Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at the Alhambra Theatre and for which André Derain designed beautiful settings and costumes. In this programme also are a shortened version of the Minkus *Don Quixote,* and *Scaramouche* to music of Finland's national composer, Sibelius. This score was originally composed for the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen in 1913, using only a small orchestra in chamber music style. The story tells how Scaramouche arrives at a ball in a grand castle, intoxicates the assembled company with his music and lures away the hostess. She eventually escapes from him, but while he is following her she kills him in loyalty to her husband. Thus the magic of the music is broken. In a dance which follows she is reconciled to her husband, but continues to hear Scaramouche's wild music and sees his ghost. She is driven mad and dies.

The third programme includes George Gé's revival of Fokine's *Schéhérazade,* which has enjoyed considerable success in Finland. Seppo Nurmimaa has created a décor for this with skilful use of colour and lighting. The work was taken into the repertory last February, and given together with a revival of Drigo's *Les Millions d'Arlequin,* also by George Gé. In this work, which is not now to be given in Edinburgh, Doris Laine was praised by the Finnish critics for her brilliant technique and charm in the difficult rôle of Columbine. The remainder of this programme consists of Johann Strauss's *Three Pierrots,* the *Black Swan pas de deux* from the third act of *Swan Lake* and two Finnish works.

BOLSHOI PRODUCTION OF GISELLE *IN FINLAND : Above and below are pictures of the first act of the new production of* Giselle *by the Finnish National Ballet from Helsinki. The rôles of Giselle and Albert are played by Doris Laine and Klaus Salin. Photos : Taisto Tuomi.*

THE SECOND ACT OF GISELLE : *Above and below are more pictures of the Bolshoi production of* Giselle *by the Finnish National Ballet. Doris Laine and Klaus Salin are seen as Giselle and Albrecht. The rôle of Myrtha, in the picture below, is played by Margareta von Bohn.* *Photos : Taisto Tuomi.*

The Edinburgh Festival will not be the first international festival in which our National Ballet has taken part. At the end of May another international festival was held in Helsinki. Last year the interest lay in the visits of American and Russian companies on the stage of the Finnish National Opera. This year the emphasis was on famous guest stars from each side of the English Channel. Paris was represented by Liane Daydé of the Paris Opéra and London by Svetlana Beriosova and Bryan Ashbridge of the Royal Ballet.

The opening programme started with Ahti Sonninen's *Ruususolmu* (A Garland of Roses) based on Finnish folk-lore with choreography by Elsa Sylvestersson. Two *pas de deux* followed: *Black Swan* given by Daydé and Uno Onkinen and the last act *pas de deux* from *The Sleeping Beauty* with Beriosova and Ashbridge. The evening finished with *Don Quixote* and Doris Laine in the principal female rôle.

But this programme was merely an *hors d'oeuvre,* the main dishes were to follow. Daydé's big evening came when she danced the title rôle in *Giselle*; her brilliant technique and artistry, especially in the second

act, were much admired. Klaus Salin, as Albrecht, proved to be an excellent partner for her.

The highlight of the festival was, however, Beriosova and Ashbridge in *Swan Lake*. Her pure classical line and the grandeur of her dancing will long be remembered by the Finnish audience. In these performances the visiting stars were well supported by the National Ballet, who also gave a programme of their own consisting of *L'Epreuve d'Amour, Scaramouche* and *Les Millions d'Arlequin*.

The second half of the festival included a visit from the Royal Swedish Ballet, who gave *Miss Julie* and *The Moon Reindeer* by Birgit Cullberg, as well as the *pas de deux* from *Don Quixote* and *The Prodigal Son*. Elsa Marianne von Rosen seemed better than ever in the title rôle of *Miss Julie*. Mariane Orlando and Gerd Andersson were praised on successive nights in *The Moon Reindeer*.

After this festival the Finnish National Ballet made a five-week tour of Finland. Following the Edinburgh Festival, a group of fifteen dancers will tour America for ten weeks.

Marketta Ormala.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover is of Wilma Curley and Jay Norman in Jerome Robbins' version of the Afternoon Of A Faun **which Ballets: U.S.A. will give at the Edinburgh Festival and at the Piccadilly Theatre in London.**

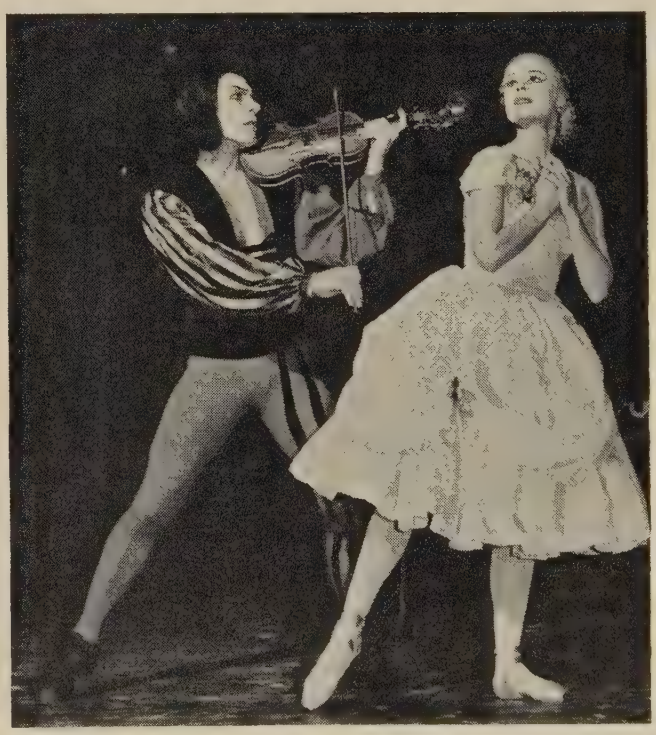
WILMA CURLEY was principally taught at the American School of Ballet. Her first company was New York City Ballet, and there she remained until she was chosen by Robbins to dance in his musical, *West Side Story*. Last year, she was one of the eight dancers, out of hundreds auditioned, to be chosen for Ballets: U.S.A. when it was created for the Spoleto Festival.

SCHEHERAZADE: *Margareta von Bahr, as Zobeida, and Klaus Salin, as the Gold Negro, in the revent revival of Fokine's famous Oriental ballet which will be seen at Edinburgh.* *Photo: Taiso Tuomi.*

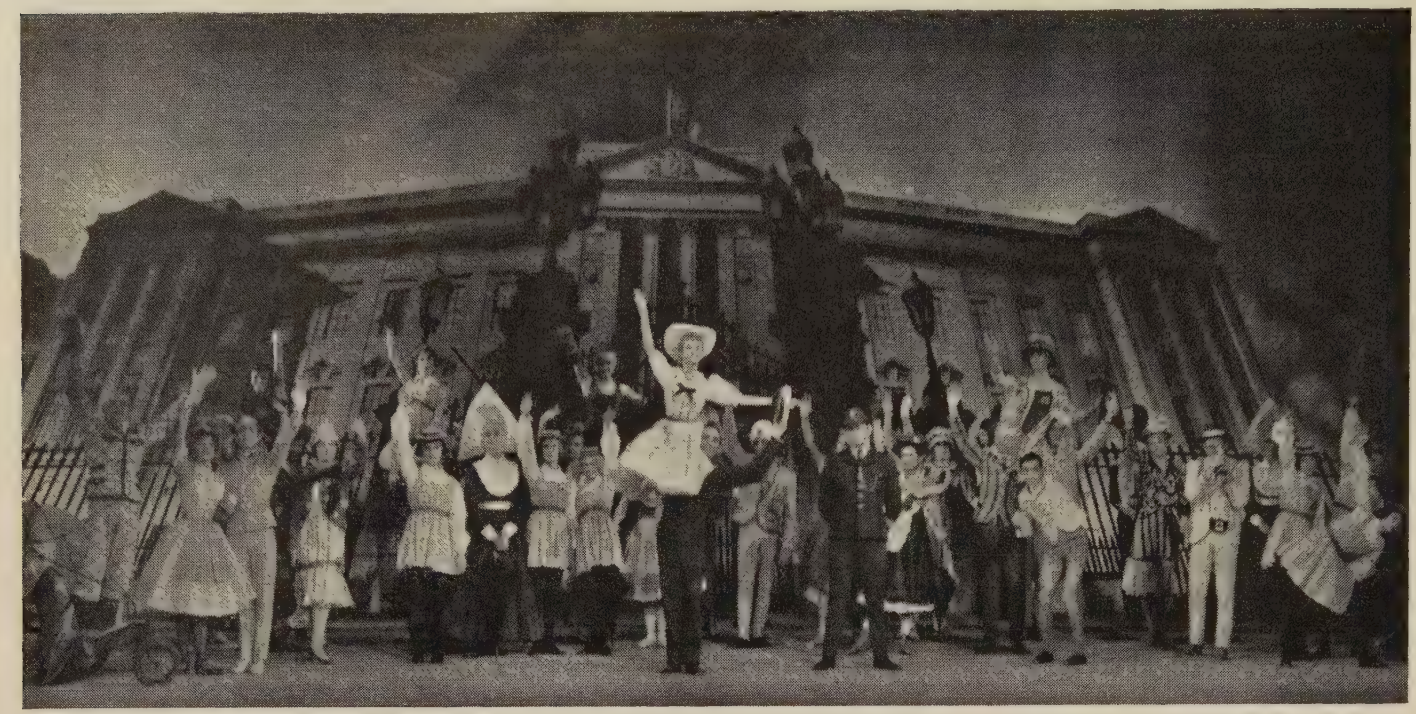
JAY NORMAN received his dance education at the School of Performing Arts in New York. From there he went into his first show which was Robbins' *West Side Story*. He too was picked for Ballets: U.S.A. at its outset. Both artists come from the group of 16 dancers who are all soloists, not stars, and who all have equal status in the company.

HARLEQUINADE: *Doris Laine, as Columbine, with Heikki Vartsi as Harlequin, in the recent revival of the Drigo ballet.* *Photo: Taisto Tuomi.*

SCARAMOUCHE: *Klaus Salin and Lisa Taxell in a recent creation to be shown in Edinburgh.* *Photo: Kurt Rebmann.*



A First Ballet from Noël Coward



WAVING AT A ROYAL PERSONAGE: The full cast of London Morning *assemble to wave at a Royal person, invisible to the audience, leaving the Palace. A moment at the end of the ballet. John Gilpin (as a Sailor) and Jeannette Minty (as an American Girl) are seen centre. Anton Dolin (as a Man in a Bath Chair), his Nurse (Marilyn Burr) and a Cadet (Keith Beckett) are seen on the left.*

London Morning

First given by London's Festival Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on July 14, 1959. Story and music by Noël Coward. Choreography by Jack Carter. Settings by William Constable. Costumes by Norman McDowell. Music orchestrated by Gordon Jacob.

The Sailor ..... JOHN GILPIN
The Gentleman in the Bath Chair ..... ANTON DOLIN
The American Girl with a Camera ..... JEANNETTE MINTY
The Nurse ..... MARILYN BURR
The Streatham Family ... ANITA LANDA, MICHAEL HOGAN, RONALD EMBLEN
The Business Men ... LOUIS GODFREY, TERRY GILBERT, PETER BROWNLEE
The Ladies of the Town ..... JANET OVERTON, DIANNE RICHARDS, JANET KEDGE
The Chief Guardsman ..... VASSILIE TRUNOFF
The Model ..... PAMELA HART
Her Escort ..... JEAN-PIERRE ALBAN
The Sloane Street Ladies ..... MARY DUCHESNE, DEIRDRE O'CONAIRE
Their Companion ..... DALTON DAVIS
The Girl in the Blue Dress ..... JOAN POTTER
The Girl in the Pink Dress ..... ANNE MORRELL
The Typist ..... GAYE FULTON
The Indian Lady ..... VALERIE DUKE
The Indian Gentleman ..... LEN MARTIN
The American Tourist ..... GEOFFREY DAVIDSON
The Cadet ..... KEITH BECKETT
The Policeman ..... PETER WHITE
The Nuns ..... WENDY BARRY, CLARE DUNCAN
The Sentries ..... KENNETH SUDELL, PETER CAZALET
The Matrons ..... ANNE ROWSE, DIANE ELESMORE
The Flower Seller ..... SUSAN WINTERTON

Corps de Ballet *of Delinquents, Schoolgirls* and *Guardsmen*

Photographed by MIKE DAVIS

CHOREOGRAPHY

FOR me the most puzzling aspect of *London Morning* proved to be the omission of the banana-skin joke. Almost every other cliché known to the British light theatre had been neatly accommodated, yet no one slipped on a banana skin, except possibly the ballet's originator, Noël Coward himself. For some years past I have suspected that nowadays the most interesting and valuable side of Noël Coward's work was the exemplary attitude he took to the Inland Revenue Commissioners, and this first ballet of his does nothing but confirm my opinion.

It has been suggested to me that *London Morning* is good of its kind, yet I have seen detergent advertisements on the television that clearly were good of *their* kind, so I am far from sure where this approach is supposed to get anyone. However, let us be charitable and start by looking at the kind of ballet Coward has produced.

In the Festival Hall programme — infinitely more enterprising than the advertising pamphlet Covent Garden brashly charge a shilling for — the author has given some account of how he came to produce the work. Having decided on a ballet about London, he recalled the childhood rhyme "Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat, Where Have You Been?" "I've Been to London to see the Queen". Thus inspired, Coward placed — perhaps abandoned would be apter — his ballet outside the gates of Buckingham Palace. As he says: "There is little story in it." He has restricted himself to what might be called colourful vignettes of London life, the passing cavalcade of London, a tasty little souvenir of the gallant old London so near and dear to the hearts of American tourists everywhere.

Coward has selected his characters with care, each one having its stereotyped part to play in the comic strip panorama. It is easier to miss the obvious than some would credit, and Coward has done admirably in working in every hackneyed detail of picture-postcard London. That "wonderful" London policeman is a near perfect example of cliché observation — notice how he even inevitably licks his pencil before writing in his inevitable notebook, just like they do in the real-life of third-rate movies and second-rate TV shows.

Having assembled the type-cast, Coward has arranged for it to do just those sweetly predictable things you would expect it to do. Dancers acting like guardsmen are clearly a comic spectacle (it's merely tragic when guardsmen act like dancers) and city gents in bowlers, floozies, as unlikely a proletarian trio from darkest Streatham one is liable to meet, and the whole dreary rigmarole of bit parts Coward has gathered together, doubtlessly amuse him and the sort of charming people who like Wilfred Pickles and TV panel games — i.e., the intellectually submerged nine-tenths of the population.

A few of my colleagues appear to have been angry about *London Morning,* but I find myself just furiously apathetic. While I despise the cheap commercialism that seems to me to have inspired it, obviously it is moderately efficient at most levels and in its appeal to the lowest common denominator in artistic taste I should say it will possibly prove sensationally successful. I can well understand that Festival Ballet, bursting with private enterprise and naturally forced to keep a weather eye on its box office takings — the only public money it receives — has to produce popularly-geared works. Nor need it be thought any the worse for that. Yet surely it would have been possible to have achieved a box office success with less pandering?

Beau Danube, Pineapple Poll, any number of like ballets come to mind that combine popularity with artistic integrity. Let us admit that the box office is important, but not exclusively so. The concert promoter could fill his hall by having Liberace playing the "Emperor" Concerto or Elvis Presley singing "Abide With Me", but that proves nothing, for in this sense the public is *not* always right.

So please don't tell me again that *London Morning* is good of its kind. Who cares? Let us all settle down and define our own kind, decide which we want and which we don't, and then quietly stand up and be counted. Poor Jack Carter! I have left till last consideration of his choreography, partly because there is not much significant one can say about it and partly because the story and music impose such restrictions on him that to blame him for anything worse than a lack of judgment is a bit like criticising a jockey for not winning the Derby when he was riding a cart-horse. He did his best — of course, that means nothing, even Foreign Ministers do their best — and, to my mind, whatever small merit the work has, apart from certain individual performances, comes almost entirely from him. I was pleased to see that in the midst of the ballet's fairly hefty man-handling by the critics he emerged comparatively unscathed.

Like Coward himself he showed complete professionalism, yet whereas Coward's seemed to me to be directed towards the insincere, tawdry and vulgar, Carter's looked only concerned in making the best of what I dare say he realised was a bad job from the beginning. His *ensemble* for the Guardsmen, both of the *pas de deux* and quite a few other moments shone out like good deeds in a naughty world.

So there it is. Festival Ballet have a success on their hands, and good luck to them. But in my opinion a few more successes like that could kill ballet as an art form.

DANCING

FESTIVAL BALLET, and in this respect it is quite unique in British ballet, has a splendidly warm and friendly air of enthusiasm which they bring to all their work. It has an open-hearted vitality which wins it friends in the audience and which I would like to see influence — to a modified extent — the people at Covent Garden. As a company they may have faults, yet lady-like mock reticence is not among them.

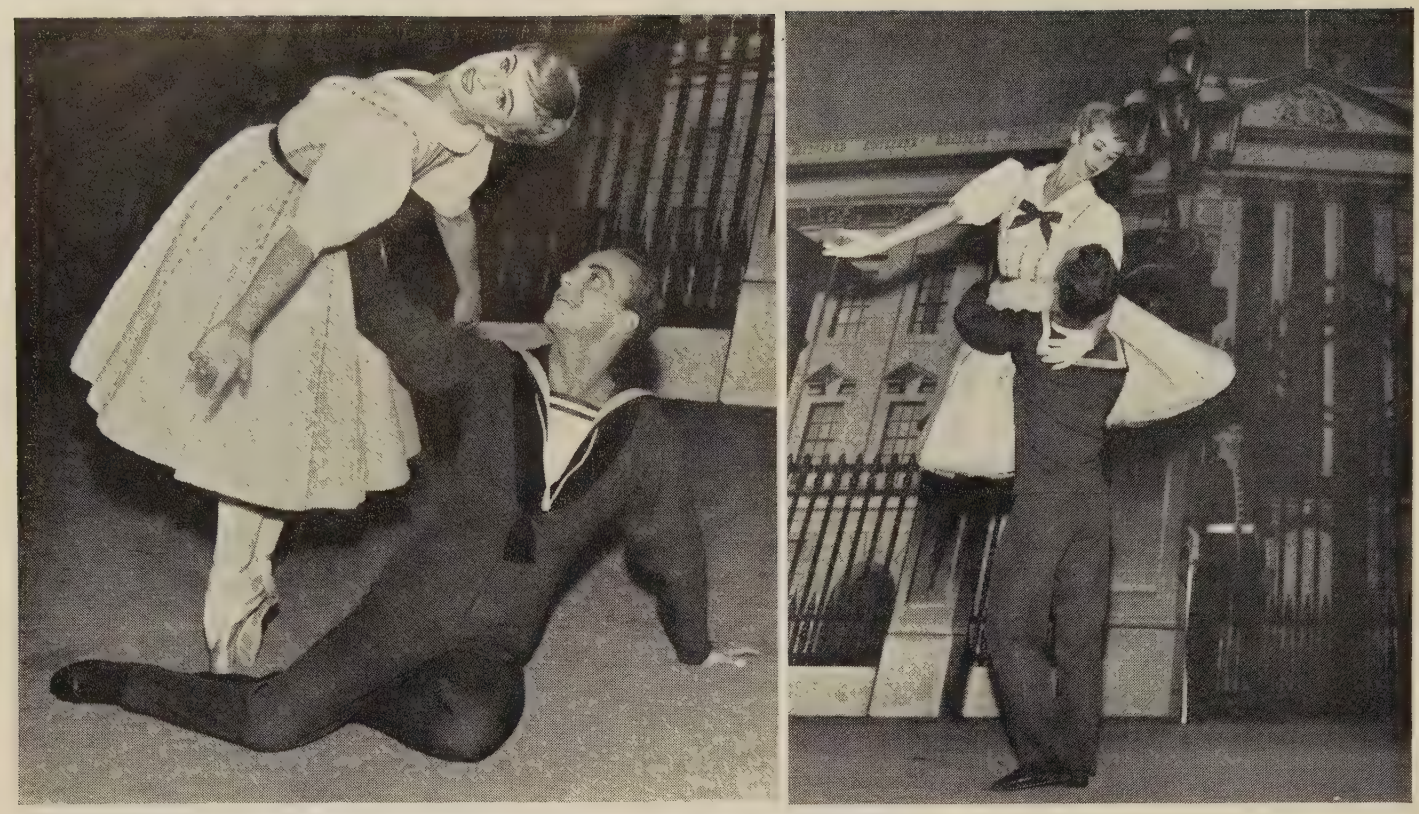
Occasionally their brashness leads them to make a sow's ear out of a silk purse, yet here it served to shine the kindest of possible lights on this not very animated cartoon of a ballet.

John Gilpin danced excellently as the Sailor, with fluent musicality, going through the ballet as if it were a none too simple, and for that matter none too engrossing, class. Gilpin certainly has a large number of rôles made for him — and the choreographic tailoring of each is by now becoming familiar — but he still awaits the part that will be enduringly linked with his name, and to my mind this is one of the minor tragedies of British ballet. That this young man, among the top handful of the world's dancers and technically now apparently at the peak of his powers, should have no better vehicle for his talents than this characterless sailor-boy seems a sad waste.

Strangely enough Louis Godfrey, in the ballet's second cast, out-acted Gilpin at every turn, and once or twice came close to the almost impossible feat of out-dancing him. Godfrey made much more of a personality of the sailor, and although nowhere did he have Gilpin's lithe precision, in the Hornpipe he danced with a rather tipsy good humour, and his less classical approach to the choreography gave it a more appropriately nautical flavour.

Both Jeannette Minty and Anita Landa

STRANGE COMPANY BEFORE THE PALACE: Left are Marilyn Burr, as a Nurse, pushing in Anton Dolin, as a Man in a Bath Chair. Right are Dianne Richards, Janet Kedge and Janet Overton, as Ladies of the Town, disapprovingly watched by Peter White as a Policeman.



LOVE INTEREST : John Gilpin, as a Sailor, and Jeannette Minty, as an American Girl, in a pas de deux. *They meet by chance before the Palace where she is in trouble with the police for embarrassing the Guardsmen sentries.*

played the American Girl, and while neither was particularly striking, Jeannette Minty showed rather more charm.

Like the other principal parts the "Chief Guardsman" — a new rank that Mr. Coward might be prepared to suggest to the Brigade — also had two interpreters — Vassilie Trunoff and André Prokovsky — for its long and exhausting solo. In both instances possibly the most commendable achievement was that of being able to march on after the dance and to salute the audience without a trace of embarrassment. They danced very slightly differing versions, as Trunoff introduced a few supposedly Russian steps on to his particular Horse Guards Parade. Both might have danced more brilliantly, and while Trunoff was generally the better, Prokovsky's proved possibly the more amusing characterization.

One of the best performances in the ballet came from Anton Dolin as the Old Man in the bath-chair, but here again I find myself wishing for what might have been rather than what was. Dolin has never had in England a really funny comedy rôle, such as he apparently had in Fokine's *Bluebeard* during the war years in America, and Festival Ballet might find it worth their while to consider reviving this *ballet bouffe,* which although of no great merit would be infinitely preferable to *London Morning.*

The rest of the cast went through their revue sketches with plenty of enthusiasm and slickness. I was particularly struck by Kenneth Sudell's agonised Guardsman who drops his rifle, and Peter White's bumbling Policeman. Both had cliché parts yet presented them with considerable finesse.

Clive Barnes.

MUSIC

MUSIC? More like glycerine notes set into jelly-mould shapes and patterns of tunes that have done duty for Coward times without number already. They are products of the same dreary formula for pentatonic saccharine that has earned the black-cap sentence for more British theatrical entertainment over the last 50 years than anybody would care to remember. From the clarinet theme drooping its lily-livered platitudes at the beginning to the regurgitated *London Pride* gushing with matronly sentimentality at the end, the score is devoid of ideas, imagination, taste or style. Its main quality is that of a sleight-of-hand demonstration, where the emptiness of substance tries unsuccessfully to deceive the ear.

No purpose would be served by examining the sequence of faded foxtrots, weary waltzes and mildewed marches more closely. They have been orchestrally prettified by Dr. Gordon Jacob (who must have earned the easiest bob-a-job of his career), and they were kept going by Geoffrey Corbett's conducting. His window-washing baton technique democratically makes no distinction between one composer and the next, whether he be a Coward or a Stravinsky. It remains one of those piquant mysteries to determine at what point in each gesture the beat is actually beaten. The London Philharmonic Orchestra has evidently solved it. At any rate, they stayed together, if only for mutual protection.

What I find most terrifying is that a score of such subterranean banality could be offered under the guise of novelty and the seal of an eminent name in this day and age. Not only that, but a score actually ordered ("commissioned" is the euphemistic term) and accepted with apparent delight by a company which aspires to some sort of artistic standards. If Festival Ballet wants to advertise the fact that pigs in pokes are part of its stock-in-trade there is nothing to prevent it. Except perhaps the knowledge that it is thereby distributing an open invitation to derision, and running the serious risk of bringing its entire function as a ballet company into disrespect.

Noël Goodwin.

DECOR

IF you were asked to design a ballet which had as its centre-piece an edifice as ugly, as architecturally haywire, yet as well-known as Buckingham Palace, what would you do? It's a bit of a poser, isn't it? None of which is helped much by the ballet being of featherweight quality while the building in question is a decided heavyweight. Two courses seem open to you — either you would be entirely frivolous and give your designs the full revue-treatment, or else you would be representational like a coloured picture postcard. Possibly there has only been one person in this century who could hit to a nicety the balance between these two approaches and he was Raoul Dufy. Alas, he died in 1953 with only four ballets to his name, but in their own particular way they were masterpieces of their kind. He treated what could have been heavy subjects with a lightness of touch that gave them quality and dignity.

Australian designer William Constable, responsible for the three settings of *London Morning,* has a heavy but competent hand. He can provide a most adequate background but he does not contribute that share of genius that makes ballet the perfect fusion of its various elements which is what this composite art should realise at its highest. Admittedly his heavy hand was just right for re-creating the solidarity of the Palace's much altered façade. But in an attempt at matching-up to the work's all-pervading lightness, and at fitting into the wide-screen dimensions of Festival Hall's stage, he has also resorted to peculiar perspectives. A fan-shaped Admiralty Arch opens on to a backward-leaning Victoria Memorial with the good Queen's statue looking unamused at a flight of headgear, drums, shoes and flags which appear to be approaching her in a rather threatening manner. These two gauzes finally open on a Buckingham Palace just falling backwards

with surprise at the odd assortment of characters assembled outside its gates. This main scene is swathed around with mauve, blue and green drapes, the whole surmounted by an ermined device which appeared to be a sunburst head whose significance entirely escaped me. These sort of drapes will always seem to me to be a lazy way of evading the issue of designing wings and borders to match up to the backcloth.

The gradual lead-in to the main setting was an effective idea and a good enough way of presenting the Royal mile on the Royal Festival Hall's few yards of stage. The Palace itself was meticulously painted even down to the last window pane. If this is the sort of designing you like, then this is the sort of designing you will like, and even if it is the sort of designing you don't like, its sheer competence is to be admired. But ballet design needs to be inspired rather than competent, and I looked in vain for any sort of inspiration. In some ways what Constable did bore certain similarity to what that fine designer Gladys Calthrope did for Brighton in Coward's enchanting operetta, *Conversation Piece*, in the early 'thirties. There was the same realism of architecture seen against clear skies. But in those days what she did was original and, to my way of thinking, inspired in that she evoked an atmosphere of Rowlandson prints. Today this kind of designing seems dated, particularly so when wedded to the kind of exaggerated perspective which we have seen done so much more effectively, and almost to death, in French revues over the past three decades.

Norman McDowell had the thankless task of fitting costumes into all this. Presumably he was dictated into making them of no period whatsoever, but the resulting jumble of periods, styles and colours was rather unsettling. Some costumes are realistic — such as those for Guardsmen, Schoolgirls, a Policeman, a Sailor and a man in a bath-chair; some are fantasies — for Tarts, Oriental Personages and Business Men; others — such as Nuns and Mannequins — are exaggerations of life. Such a mixture of styles is bound to end in an undetermined salad. Individually some of these clothes were good, collectively they amounted to nothing more than a collection of people having had fun in a dressing-up chest. A unity of style would have achieved a more satisfactory theatrical impact. It was rather disappointing from one who had realised all the things that this ballet lacked when he designed *The Witch Boy* last year. Yet when all is said and done, designing costumes with wit is one of the hardest assignments for the designer, for they must project, they must be costumes which people can wear naturally yet at the same time their humour must be slightly exaggerated. In this respect a lesson might be learnt from what Lord Berners did for *Wedding Bouquet* and Osbert Lancaster for *Bonne-Bouche*.

Peter Williams.

UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT

(above): While some schoolgirls are playing leap-frog, one of them lands up with her head between a sentry's legs, much to his embarrassment and also to the consternation of the two Nuns (Wendy Barry and Clare Duncan). The Sentries are played by Peter Cazalet and Kenneth Sudell.

Left, John Gilpin, as a Sailor, expresses his emotions in a lively hornpipe.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Running Time

32 minutes.

Audience Reaction

5 calls on 1st night which were different to the kind of calls in most theatres as each call went on and on, and included most of the principals stepping forward to take a bow. Noël Coward took his call from a box and stood up with a spotlight on him. Enthusiasm from certain parts of the house, mainly from upstairs.

Press Reaction

6 stars — rave; 5 stars — enthusiastic; 4 stars — favourable; 3 stars — lukewarm; 2 stars — unfavourable; 1 star — pan.

Daily Express *; *Daily Mail* *; *Daily Telegraph* **; *Evening Standard* *****; *Financial Times* *; *Manchester Guardian* *; *News Chronicle* *****; *Observer* *; *Sunday Times* **; *The Times* **.

And so to Bath

A group from the Royal Swedish Ballet who appeared in England at the Bath Festival reviewed by CLIVE BARNES and E. C. MASON.

THE THEATRE ROYAL, BATH: A picture of the historic Regency theatre where the theatrical presentations take place during the Bath Festival.

LIKE Jane Austen's Mrs. Allen, I am "quite happy, quite satisfied with Bath" — for it is a delightful place to encounter a music festival. There is an atmosphere to Bath, cradled in its motherly Somerset hills, with all its decaying elegance — genteel rather than raffish — which has won it a special place in my heart. But despite the city's spacious grandeur and the beauty of its surrounding countryside, as a festival centre it has one grave deficiency in the lack of the right concert halls and theatres to display its wares. The Theatre Royal, for example, Bath's only theatre, is an admirable, cosily intimate building, but is unfortunately only large enough to accommodate small companies.

The ideal ballet company in such circumstances would be perhaps either Ballet Rambert, the Miskovitch or Béjart companies, or possibly even the Western Theatre Ballet, the West Country's own regional ballet, which sadly was reduced to dancing in the streets of Bath during the festival, in an effort to raise funds. But while this chance was missed, the Festival organisers were still to be congratulated for the sound sense they showed in bringing a group of soloists from the Royal Swedish Ballet to Bath, paying their first visit to Great Britain, apart from the season given by the full company at the Edinburgh Festival two years ago.

Although the Royal Swedish Ballet was officially founded in 1773, it has had such a spasmodic career — quite unlike the neighbouring Danish company — that it is in effect a modern and still developing company. Its recent history really dates from the beginning of 1953 when Mary Skeaping, its present director, first went to Stockholm to mount the full-length *Swan Lake* in 1953. Since then Skeaping has mounted all the standard "Anglo-Russian" classics for the Swedish Ballet, as well as a few Fokine revivals. Massine has also produced three of his ballets for the company in recent years. Also, unlike the Royal Danish Ballet, the Swedes are developing a lively new tradition of modern choreography. This movement has been led by Birgit Cullberg, but other works have been mounted, notably by the company's *premier danseur* Björn Holmgren and Ivo Cramer.

The group originally consisted of eight soloists: Elsa Marianne von Rosen (making her last appearances with the "company" before her recent resignation), Mariane Orlando, Wiveka Ljung, Yvonne Sjöberg, Björn Holmgren, Caj Selling, Gunnar Randin and Svante Lindberg. Unfortunately, Caj Selling injured his foot on the opening night of the season, and could subsequently only appear partnering Orlando in the excerpts from *Swan Lake*. Most of his parts were taken by Werner Klausen, who was specially flown out from Stockholm to replace him.

Both programmes given by the group were enterprising and gave a fair idea of what is going on in Swedish ballet, showing both excerpts from the classical wing and also certain snippets from the modern Swedish repertory.

Outstanding among the modern items was undoubtedly Cullberg's *Medea,* yet before passing on to that I would like first to discuss the remainder of the contemporary works on view. A number of them were by Björn Holmgren, including a Suite from *Midsummer Vigil*, a work first created last year for the ill-fated Edinburgh International Ballet, and later revived for the Royal Swedish Ballet. The first Holmgren ballet I ever saw, *Suite Classique,* to Lalo's *Namouna* music, in Stockholm five years ago struck me as both competently fluent yet essentially characterless. But even with this over-ambitious work there were signs that Holmgren, a widely experienced dancer himself, knew how to handle classical choreography in a sure, unpretentious way. There were three works of his on the bill of fare, showing in a way his development as a choreographer so far.

Variations de Ballet was, according to the programme, first created in 1951 for a ballet club, being Holmgren's first attempt at choreography. Set to the Brahms/Haydn Variations it is a plotless *pas de trois* for a girl and two men, somewhat Balanchinian in manner, simple, direct and slight. Perhaps the principal fault lies in it being closely tied to its music, yet not in any way reflecting the score's structure. Nevertheless it was obviously a promising apprentice work of the kind that would be sympathetically received in a workshop programme, and it was neatly danced by Gunnar Randin, Werner Klausen (substituting for the injured Selling) and particularly by Mariane Orlando. A dance study, *Plus qui Lente,* proved to be a slender piece for a girl and her *barre.* Possibly owing its inspiration to Lander's *Etudes,* it was chastely danced by the lissom, pony-tailed Wiveka Ljung.

Midsummer Vigil, when first produced, received a somewhat mixed press, partly I suspect through the unfortunate notoriety of its Hugo Alfven music. Yet these excerpts given here — and I don't know how much the work has been changed since Edinburgh — struck me as not only having an artless charm, but despite their basic conventionality, showing the beginning of something like a personal style in Holmgren's work. There was a bounce and vigour to some of the *allegro* passages that reminded me of Bournonville, and the whole thing had the experienced craftsmanship one would expect. Von Rosen and Holmgren himself danced the leading rôles excellently. While both of them have an international style, there is also something peculiarly Swedish in their manner, which gives their dancing a distinctive and charming flavour of its own.

This flavour was also to be found in the excerpts from Elsa Marianne von Rosen's *Prometheus.* First produced in May of last year, this re-working of the old Beethoven/Viganó ballet was Von Rosen's début as a choreographer. While it is difficult to assess the work on this brief excerpt, it looked musical, moderately inventive and some of the poses showed a good plastic imagination. It was sensitively danced by Von Rosen and Holmgren.

The most important of present-day Swedish choreographers is Birgit Cullberg, an ex-Jooss dancer turned classical choreographer, who is now one of the outstanding figures of Scandinavian ballet. Unfortunately the injury to Selling prevented me from seeing *Moon Reindeer,* one of her most recent works, but I did see the revised version of her *Medea,* never before seen in England.

Cullberg's work was first shown in England in 1951 when she brought a scratch company of Swedish dancers to the Princes Theatre and gave a most unfortunate and misleading season. Included in this repertory, together with the badly produced production of her *Miss Julie,* was a first draft of *Medea,* and a very fumbling first draft it proved to be. A later version, still using Bartók music, was first given by the Royal Swedish Ballet in 1954, and when I saw it later that year in Stockholm I was immediately impressed by its power and originality. (The work has recently been revived by the New York City Ballet with success.)

I saw the ballet, which is based on Euripides' tragedy, in the same week as I saw Callas in Cherubini's operatic version of the story at Covent Garden, and the comparison was entirely in favour of the ballet. Cherubini's cold and stylised music showed no feeling for either Euripides or tragedy, yet Cullberg's ballet on the other hand manages to convey all the storm and heroic passion of the original.

It opens with a startling dance image symbolising family life, showing two small children encircled by the limbs of their parents, Jason and Medea. The progress of the story, Jason's new love for Creusa, Medea's fury and eventual vengeance, is exceptionally well expressed in the choreography, and the fast-moving construction of the ballet which notches up from climax to climax has a starkness entirely appropriate to a Greek tragic theme. The one defect in

the choreography seems to be a tendency on Cullberg's part to use on occasion classical steps as an end in themselves, somewhat in the manner of Lifar or Petit, rather than as a means of dramatic expression. Yet by any account this is a notable work.

The ballet as given in Bath suffered quite a bit from the omission of the *corps de ballet,* which although conventionally used, and in fact something of a weakness in the general choreographic plan, nevertheless gave the work a certain weight which was missing when reduced to a cast of four principals. For me the surprise of the performance was Mariane Orlando's magnificent portrayal of Medea. Having up to now thought of her as a promising classical dancer, it was amazing to see her grasp this rôle with the ferocious avidity of a Kaye or a Hinton. She not only proved completely convincing in the mad transports of Medea's frenzy, but she made the ending, where Medea, having slaughtered her own children in an effort to appease her rage, still finds that she loves the faithless Jason, immensely touching.

Young Svante Lindberg, dancing in place of Selling, made a brave attempt at Jason. He is a well-built athletic dancer, with the beginnings of a good technique, and a lithe masculinity. His characterisation was perhaps sketchy, yet little more could have been expected in the circumstances, and he is unquestionably a dancer of high promise. Gunnar Randin made the best of a pretty bad job as Creon — his rôle having been reduced by the choreographer to lay anonymity — and while Wiveka Ljung was a moderately effective Creusa, she certainly did nothing to displace my memories of Gerd Andersson in this rôle. The music taken from various Bartók piano pieces (principally *Mikrokosmos*), arranged and orchestrated by Herbert Sandberg, was admirably played by the Goldsbrough Orchestra conducted by David Tidboald.

As a token reminder of Sweden's Massine repertory Orlando and Klausen danced the Waltz from *Gaîté Parisienne.* The only other 20th century item was Holmgren's party-piece, *Figaro,* a solo specially composed for him by Maurice Béjart and danced to Rossini's *Largo al factotum.* This solo, which Holmgren danced at the Pavlova Gala in 1956 at the old Stoll Theatre, was a cheerful trifle, and was danced with considerable panache.

Clive Barnes.

THE CLASSICS

As we have been recently getting accustomed to programmes built up of Petipa *soli, The Dying Swan,* and suchlike, the plan of bringing together a number of streams of choreography, stretching from Bournonville to Cullberg, as *divertissement* entertainment suggested extremely interesting possibilities. On this occasion the policy was reasonably judicious too, for the Royal Swedish dancers are adaptable and industrious, and capable of appearing in a wider range of choreographic styles than most other dancers.

Since she became director in 1954, Mary Skeaping has done much to raise the standard of the classical works. *Swan Lake* (produced by her in 1953), *Giselle, The Sleeping Beauty* and *Coppélia,* have all been introduced to the repertoire. But five years is hardly long enough for her to be able to achieve her aims, and thus the classical items — both snippets and long extracts — often revealed that there are still a number of technical difficulties to be overcome.

The company is still short of purely classical dancers. Elsa Marianne von Rosen and Björn Holmgren are very talented and experienced classically-trained dancers able to perform most *soli* and *pas de deux* very well, but their physiques brand them as *demi-caractère* dancers. True, Mariane Orlando seems to have great possibilities. She has an incredible range of technique and is able to dance both modern and classical rôles with distinction. But after seeing her Odette, I cannot avoid feeling doubtful about her future as a classical dancer. Even taking into account that she may have adopted what is probably a wise approach — not placing too much emphasis on characterization in shortish extracts — her interpretation, in my opinion, left something to be desired.

The classical items were of mixed quality, and one cannot therefore write about these with anything like the enthusiasm the modern works, especially the Cullberg, deserve. At the best, they showed the dancers capable of giving efficient professional performances: at their worst, they demanded a too emphatically well-disposed audience. Nor were they helped in these by an orchestra under a conductor who gave one the impression of never having seen these classics before. The *pas de trois* from *Swan Lake,* for example, was dragged out so laboriously that it became little more than a series of poses. The *Coppélia pas de deux* ended with Holmgren supporting von Rosen across his back. Compelled to hold this position for nerve-wracking seconds before the orchestra halted, both faces expressed a whole series of exclamation marks as they consigned the conductor to a firing squad.

Rather than being an *embarras de richesses,* it could, I suppose, be argued that the two programmes left the impression of having covered too wide a field too thinly. But with limited material at her disposal, and, consequently, some miscasting in classical items, one occasionally felt that Mary Skeaping could scarcely be accused of any motive other than the wish to provide entertainment.

Generally speaking, the shorter the *soli* the more unrewarding and commonplace they were. There was evidence of imagination and good taste in presentation everywhere, and, of course, the longer the excerpt, the more prominent the *minutiae* of skilled production became.

A large amount of interest resided in the differences in choreography from the ver-

Continued on page 34

RECENT SWEDISH CREATIONS: Left, Mariane Orlando and Caj Selling in a scene from Birgit Cullberg's Medea, *based on the Greek tragedy. Right, Svante Lindberg and Yvonne Sjöberg in Holmgren's* Midsummer Vigil, *originally created for last year's Edinburgh Festival. Photos: Enar Merkel Rydberg.*

Rambert at the Pillow

by ARTHUR TODD

OPENING NIGHT PARTY: At the party given by Ted Shawn after Ballet Rambert's opening night at Jacob's Pillow are seen: In the foreground, Royes Fernandez, Violette Verdy, Ted Shawn and Ben Sommers (President of Capezio). Behind them is Marie Rambert talking to a group with Anatole Chujoy (Editor of Dance News) *behind her. Top left are Richard Pleasant (co-founder of Ballet Theatre) with John Christian (Associate Director of Jacob's Pillow). Photo: Jack Mitchell.*

THE long-awaited appearances of Ballet Rambert at Ted Shawn's Jacob's Pillow have proved to be one of the outstanding events that have taken place in the twenty-seven year history of this annual summer festival of dance. Just as the 10 solo dancers of the Royal Danish Ballet established a beach-head, as it were, for the return of the full company the following year in New York, so, too, has this delightful group of young dancers from Britain had the warmest possible welcome from sold-out houses. Nearly every major name in the American dance field has made a pilgrimage to Jacob's Pillow to pay homage to Madame Rambert, to honour her, her dancers and, most of all perhaps, the spirit that has made this company a crucible for young dancers and choreographers.

As noted in previous issues, Ballet Rambert's three-week season at Jacob's Pillow opened with Kenneth MacMillan's *Laiderette* and *Giselle* with Beryl Goldwyn and Christopher Lyall. The second week's programme, in many ways the most interesting, featured a cross-section of ballets from various periods in the history of this company: Walter Gore's *Simple Symphony,* Andrée Howard's *Death and the Maiden,* Antony Tudor's *Judgment of Paris* and *Gala Performance,* and Norman Morrice's *Two Brothers.* The final week of the season was devoted to this company's production of *Coppélia.*

One thing immediately evident with this company is the power and authority of its founder-director that seems to shine through every performance. Analysing these performances in *The New York Times,* John Martin wrote that "its true substance consists of the lively genius of Marie Rambert in discovering, training, directing and channelling young talents". Although it is manifestly unfair to single out one dancer and one choreographer, it is only fair to report that Gillian Martlew and Norman Morrice made the outstanding contributions of the season. In fact, one might be tempted to go further by saying that it was almost worth the entire company's trip so that they might introduce Norman Morrice's work to American audiences. Obviously, as she has evidenced so often in the past, Marie Rambert has an infallible instinct for discovering and developing young choreographers, and in Norman Morrice she has produced one of the most talented young designers of dance seen hereabouts in many seasons.

Fortunately for this reviewer, it was possible to observe one of the rehearsals of *Two Brothers* in London before its première last year. All that was implicit in character, mood and shape then seems since to have come to full fruition in the finished work. It is indeed a welcome change to see a ballet in which the movement arises and develops honestly to fit the characters and their action. And Norman Morrice gave a deeply revealing and moving performance of one of the pivotal rôles. Here, certainly, is a young dancer-choreographer with a brilliant future. John Chesworth, too, was admirable. Gillian Martlew, who dances everything well, made the most of a rôle that is not yet fully developed. Though the movement for the *corps* seemed repetitious at times, especially in its transition from mime to dance and back again, these are very minor reservations about a first work of such major importance.

When one can watch a dancer like Gillian Martlew play three such disparate rôles as Venus in *Judgment of Paris,* the Girl in *Two Brothers* and the Italian ballerina in *Gala Performance,* one can begin to appreciate her range and scope. Aside from being a very beautiful girl in the classic sense (she reminded many of us very much of Zorina's appearance more than twenty years ago), she has a commendable technique and a delightful stage presence which make her one of the treasures of the company. John Chesworth, who danced four different rôles on the same programme, proved to be the most noteworthy male dancer.

On the programme of five shorter ballets both Walter Gore's *Simple Symphony* and Morrice's *Two Brothers* are new to American audiences. *Simple Symphony* makes a very pleasant opening ballet and also serves as an introduction to the style and talents of the company. Especially interesting was its choreographic construction and its theatricalised use of folk dance materials. Andrée Howard's *Death and the Maiden,* which many of us saw some twenty years ago when it was mounted in New York by Ballet Theatre, now appears more middle-European than it did then in style and it is noteworthy now chiefly for the performance by June Sandbrook. who moves very beautifully indeed. After watching such superb performances as Agnes de Mille's, Lucia Chase's and Maria Karnilova's in *Judgment of Paris,* along with Antony Tudor and Hugh Laing in the male rôles, it is indeed difficult to grant that this present Ballet Rambert production is its equal. The same holds true of *Gala Performance* with the exception of Gillian Martlew and Lucette Aldous.

Both of Ballet Rambert's full-length productions of *Giselle* and *Coppélia* were praised for their meticulous attention to style and detail. *Coppélia,* especially, has been hailed by Walter Terry in *The New York Herald-Tribune* for "Madame Rambert's lively, witty and extremely polished staging" and for the pert, charming and vivacious Lucette Aldous, whom he found to be "the most captivating interpreter of the rôle since Alexandra Danilova last danced it for us". In both of these ballets, as well as in the programme of shorter works, one might have preferred an orchestra rather than two pianos, or, as is the case of some of the shorter ballets, recordings. On the other hand, however, it was indeed a great asset to have the full décor and costumes on hand for all eight works presented during the first visit.

Though America is already thoroughly familiar with Frederick Ashton's later works, it seems unfortunate that just one of his earlier works might not have been included in the repertoire. This reviewer also missed the presence of Ann Horn and Norman Dixon, two 1958 members of the company, and well remembered for their performance in Dixon's *Voice in the Wilderness* for the Sunday Ballet Club.

One factor is especially noteworthy about Ballet Rambert's dancers, and this is their complete awareness of movement qualities and, whether they are dancing abstract or dramatic roles, one has the feeling that they are making total use of the dancer's body. This, coupled with their founder-director's vision and pioneering spirit, makes them a notable company. In Britain Madame Rambert has served as inspirer, incubator and springboard for choreographers and dancers and, in a sense, has served the same function as Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis have in another branch of dance in America. When Madame Rambert hailed Jacob's Pillow as "the Glyndebourne of the dance"

RAMBERT ARRIVES: Antony Tudor, one of Rambert's first choreographic discoveries, greets her on her arrival at Idlewild Airport. Photos: Arthur Todd.

AMERICAN MODERN DANCER TALKS: Bertram Ross, left, talking to Lucette Aldous, John Chesworth, Norman Morrice, Marie Rambert and other members of the company.

RAMBERT IN SYLVAN SETTING: Above, she practices some steps with Ted Shawn. Below, she and Ted Shawn are seen surrounded by members of the company in a wood near Jacob's Pillow.

in an Opening Night speech she was quite right, and her company, most certainly, could not have been presented under better circumstances on their first appearances in the United States. And when she runs forward to bow with the company in acknowledgment of applause and bravos, she suddenly seems younger than any dancer on the stage. It's this youthful spirit, no doubt, that makes Ballet Rambert one of the most endearing companies to visit us in many seasons.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION: Vaslav Nijinsky with the nymphs, and in the original Bakst setting, in the 1912 production of L'Après-Midi d'un Faune. *There is a picture of Robbins'* Afternoon of a Faun *on the front cover.*

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L'Après-Midi d'un Faune

by CLIVE BARNES

ALTHOUGH most of the early Diaghilev ballets seem to have been a storm centre for later controversy, with no one knowing quite who contributed the first idea or theme, *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* is the only ballet where even the name of the choreographer is in some doubt, although it is normally ascribed to Vaslav Nijinsky, who is always credited with it on the programmes.

No aspect of the Nijinsky legend is more hotly debated than the question of whether or not he was a great creative artist, or indeed whether he was really a creative artist at all. On the one hand there are those who revere him as one of the greatest of all choreographers and the father of modern ballet, while at the other extreme are those who dismiss him as a mere puppet carrying out the ideas of his master, Diaghilev. The evidence on both sides is difficult to sift, the more so because we have never had Nijinsky's *own* full story (although in his *Diary*, published after his madness, he claims full credit for the ballet), and this is a subject on which even the most apparently impartial of observers seem to become impassioned.

As one might have expected, Nijinsky's wife, Romola Nijinsky, is his most fervent advocate, and in her biography, *Nijinsky*, she forcibly puts forward his claims. According to her account, Nijinsky first had the idea of the ballet in Karlsbad during the summer of 1911, and she is emphatic that the whole theme and conception of the piece was worked out without any reference to Diaghilev. She describes Nijinsky, at the time of the first discussions on Fokine's *Daphnis and Chloë*, going up to Diaghilev and saying: "I have in mind a choreographic poem, not a ballet, which I would like to do. My idea of Greece is utterly different from Bakst's and Fokine's'." When Diaghilev suggested that he worked on it, Nijinsky is said to have replied that the "whole *oeuvre* is already quite clear". Nijinsky did not know what music to use for it, and together with Diaghilev he finally settled on the Debussy tone poem. Romola Nijinsky stresses that neither Diaghilev nor Bakst saw anything of the ballet until it was completed. She says that the early rehearsals were carried out over two months in Paris, where Nijinsky worked "with Gavrilov as his material, as a sculptor works his clay". Gavrilov was a young dancer recently graduated from the Maryinsky, and Romola Nijinsky gives a detailed account of how they worked. "Each fragment was worked and indicated by Nijinsky, then expressed by Gavrilov. Nijinsky would demonstrate, Gavrilov imitate, and very often whole phrases were rejected, or completely changed in movement."

When the company assembled at Monte Carlo at the beginning of 1912, Nijinsky started to rehearse the seven dancers taking part — according to his wife, this took Nijinsky nearly three months, and the ballet had 120 rehearsals. When these were complete, she continues, "Bakst and Diaghilev were admitted. Sergei Pavlovitch was at once enthusiastic. At last the art of choreography had achieved a new form, both he and Bakst immediately understood its tremendous importance."

Lifar's account of the ballet's origins are very different from those of Nijinsky's wife. In his biography *Diaghilev*, he says: "The two men were sitting in the Piazza San Marco, it was 1911, when suddenly the whole outline of a future ballet, *Faun*, appeared to Diaghilev. Leaping to his feet there and then, between two pillars, he began to depict the dense angular plastic movements of this ballet, and so enthused Nijinsky that for a time all else was ousted from his mind."

In a later book, *A History of Russian Ballet*, Lifar asserts that: "Nijinsky was no more than an interpreter of Diaghilev's creative ideas, and at rehearsals he would turn to Diaghilev every minute and ask him 'what to do next'." Later Lifar calls *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* Diaghilev's "first attempt" at choreography!

Stravinsky in his autobiography also holds no brief for Nijinsky, but he nominates a different choreographer. According to this account Diaghilev's "idea was to make Nijinsky compose, under his own strict supervision, a sort of antique tableau conjuring up the erotic gambols of a faun importuning nymphs. At the suggestion of Bakst, who was obsessed by ancient Greece, this tableau was to be presented as an animated bas-relief, with the figures in profile. Bakst dominated this production. Besides creating the decorative setting and the beautiful costumes, he inspired the choreography even to the slightest movements". Prince Peter Lieven (*The Birth of the Ballets-Russes)* thought that the ballet probably *originated* with Bakst, and appears to attribute the choreography equally to Diaghilev and Nijinsky. Boris Kochno (*Le Ballet)* calls it a "conception of Bakst's" and does not commit himself any further.

Arnold Haskell (*Diaghileff — His Artistic and Private Life)* is more moderate than Lifar and Stravinsky, and considerably more credible in his account of the work's beginnings. He suggests that the original idea arose from discussions between Diaghilev and Bakst, with the latter having the original inspiration. He maintains that they kept "the strictest supervision of detail in their own hands" and he continues by claiming that the idea to make the ballet a moving bas-relief was "solely Bakst's". He explains the lengthy rehearsals by suggesting that Diaghilev and Bakst "had the greatest difficulty in making their meaning clear to him [Nijinsky], and he in his turn found it difficult to explain it to the dancers".

Grigoriev, Diaghilev's *régisseur*, had given his account in *The Diaghilev Ballet, 1909-1929*. He says that in 1912 he learnt, "quite by chance, that during the previous spring at Monte Carlo, Nijinsky, Bakst and four female dancers had secretly been rehearsing a ballet to Debussy's *Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune*". He was told by the dancers in confidence that the idea had been Diaghilev's own, "and that he had been influenced in its conception by Dalcroze, whom he had first met some time before". He later says that Diaghilev always watched the rehearsals himself, but makes no mention of Bakst in this connection, and at no time suggests that Nijinsky was not entirely responsible for the actual choreography.

Reading through all these varying accounts, at least one thing is certain, and that is that the actual *idea* of the ballet must have come from either Diaghilev or Bakst. The theme, like the music itself, is obviously based on the poem by Mallarmé, and it is a fact in no dispute — it is actually brought up by Romola Nijinsky

herself among others — that Nijinsky was not aware of the poem's existence until after the ballet's first performance. Not that this would have precluded Nijinsky from having the vague conception of a ballet on a Grecian subject, even though such a thought is perhaps more likely to have occurred to Bakst. It is significant that Grigoriev should have mentioned Dalcroze, for here quite possibly was the real germ of the choreography. The influence of Dalcroze on Nijinsky's later ballet *Le Sacre de Printemps* is generally noted, yet possibly his effect on *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* is no less marked.

Emile-Jacques Dalcroze invented the system known as Eurhythmics, as a means of inculcating music into his pupils. In 1910 he founded an institute at Hellerau, near Dresden, and it was there that Diaghilev and Nijinsky visited him. At the time of the production of *Jeux* we find Debussy ironically writing of Nijinsky (in a letter to Robert Godet, quoted by Edward Lockspeiser in *The Decca Book of Ballet)* "his perverse genius is entirely devoted to a peculiar kind of mathematics. The man adds up demi-semiquavers with his feet, proves the result with his arms and then, as if suddenly struck with paralysis, he stands listening to the music with a wicked look on his face. And this is what they call 'the stylisation of gesture'. How ugly! It's Dalcrozian! And I say this believing that Dalcroze is one of music's worst enemies. You can imagine what havoc his theories have played with this wild young Nijinsky!"

To me the most likely course of events leading up to Nijinsky's *Faune* corresponds fairly closely with that described by Haskell, with Nijinsky, imbued with Dalcrozian theory, working under the direction of Bakst and Diaghilev, with most of the original ideas coming from his choreographic mentors.

The first performance took place on May 29, 1912, at the Théâtre du Châtelat in Paris. The principal dancers were Vera Nelidova and Nijinsky himself, and it is worth noting that the work at these first performances was called *Prélude à L'Après-Midi d'un Faune.* This performance provided one of the all-time sensations of ballet, and at its conclusion it was applauded, hissed, cheered, booed and catcalled. In his efforts to restore the situation, Diaghilev immediately ordered a repeat of the ballet, which was consequently given twice on its first performance.

The slight story tells of a faun dallying with nymphs in the warm afternoon sun. One nymph, more adventurous than her sisters, gives him some encouragement, only to run off, dropping her veil in her flight. The Faun takes the veil, places it on his rock, and stretches himself out ecstatically over it. Possibly part of the uproar at the work's première was occasioned by the uncompromising strangeness of its choreographic idiom, but many in the audience apparently took exception to the suggestive eroticism of the Faun's final movements, and certainly the *scandale* which later blew up in the Press almost exclusively concerned itself with questions of morality.

The wild Press controversy, in which Gaston Calmette, editor of *Le Figaro,* and Auguste Rodin took a prominent part, is said to have taken Diaghilev by surprise, although he seems to have been far from adverse to the publicity it afforded.

When the ballet was first produced in London on February 17 of the following year, again with Nelidova and Nijinsky, Cyril Beaumont notes (in *The Diaghilev Ballet in London)* that it "was received with rapturous enthusiasm mingled with some hisses . . . but the final applause was so loud and so sustained that Diaghilev gave instructions for the ballet to be repeated".

The atmosphere of that famous *scandale* has never quite faded, so even today traces of it are still left hanging around the ballet's very title, and the work has always remained among the most notorious of all the Diaghilev ballets. During the days of the post-Diaghilev Ballets Russes it still held its place in the repertory, its most notable interpreters being pernaps David Lichine, and later Igor Youskevitch. The only British revival was that produced by the Ballet Rambert, revived by Léon Woizikovsky, on April 20, 1931, when the principal parts were taken by William Chappell and Diana Gould.

Today, when the ballet is less than a shadow of its former self, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make much assessment of its original merit. At the time of its creation opinions seemed to have been fairly evenly divided, and it is interesting that Debussy (quoted, as before, by Edward Lockspeiser) considered it a spectacle of "erotic bestiality, hideous from the front, even more hideous in profile". The composer, incidentally, walked out on the dress rehearsal.

The designs by Bakst were clearly magnificent and the photographs and descriptions of Nijinsky in the ballet make it apparent that this was, in every way, one of the great portrayals of 20th-century ballet. However, if I were to hazard a guess on the choreography's quality, I feel that my vote would have been cast with the unfortunate Debussy, because although Nijinsky kept to the letter of the music, he missed its spirit by two-and-a-half miles, and what Mallarmé, with his very clear ideas on ballet aesthetics, would have made of this "choreographic poem" one shudders to think. His most fervent disciple, Camille Mauclair, a good friend of the Ballets Russes, was among the ballet's fiercest opponents. Nor do I think the work's archaeological interest would have stood up to very close inspection, as the ballet's connection with ancient Greek art seems slender, to say the most. Although one is continually reading about members of the Diaghilev group visiting museums, occasionally one finds oneself wondering just what they did in them.

As to the work's originality, this is unquestionable. In the frequently quoted quotation from Haskell's *Balletomania,* Fokine claims that Nijinsky's own rôle was based on a bacchanal from *Tannhäuser* which he once arranged for Karsavina and Nijinsky. Haskell says he has verified this, and that "it is beyond dispute". However, no one else has ever mentioned it in print, and while there may have been some influence here, I doubt whether it was so clear a case of plagiarism as Fokine suggested.

To my mind the truly unusual thing about the work — even if one thinks the choreographic idiom to have been little more than a gimmick sustained by the incredible presence of Nijinsky himself — is that it uses dance as an end in itself. In Fokine's ballets, and the point has been shrewdly taken up by Romola Nijinsky, dancing never occurs without a logical excuse. While one can appreciate the motives that prompted this embargo, which at the time was probably essential to the Fokine revolution, it placed too harsh a limitation on choreographic imagination for it ever to have been permanently acceptable.

The ballet is also of considerable historic importance, in that it marks the end of Diaghilev's first period, and the beginning of the quest for novelty that was to stay with him until the end of his life.

Since the war the ballet has virtually passed out of the repertory, although it has occasionally been seen in England performed by the Ballet Rambert. Two notable Rambert revivals, the first at the so-called Nijinsky Galas held at the Harringay Arena in 1949, featured Jean Babilée and, in 1958, Milorad Miskovitch. Other versions, both of which omitted the *corps de ballet,* have been given with Milorad Miskovitch and Alicia Markova, and Alexis Rassine and Nadia Nerina.

The fame of Nijinsky's version has also led other choreographers to produce a ballet to the same music. Serge Lifar gave a version at the Paris Opéra in 1932, which closely resembled the original, but omitted everything except Lifar and the rock, giving not undue prominence to the rock! Another production, also apparently owing a lot to the Nijinsky, was by the Royal Danish Ballet in 1941, which had new choreography by Borge Ralov. Ten years later Celia Franca choreographed a version, using point work, for the Canadian National Ballet. There have also been innumerable home-grown productions by lesser-known ballet masters all over Europe. However, the most notable of modern versions, indeed one of the most notable of modern ballets, is that choreographed by Jerome Robbins for the New York City Ballet.

The first performance of *Afternoon of a Faun* took place on May 14, 1953, danced by Tanaquil LeClercq and Francisco Moncion, with scenery and lighting by Jean Rosenthal and costumes by Irene Sharaff. The work was later revived by Robbins's own company, Ballets: U.S.A., danced by Wilma Curley and Jay Norman. To my mind this ballet, which I first saw during New York City Ballet's European tour in 1955, is Robbins's finest work to date. As it will be fully reviewed in *Dance and Dancers* after it has been seen at the Edinburgh Festival and in London, I will give here just the briefest of introductions.

For inspiration Robbins has gone back to Mallarmé, and the setting disregards the glory that was Bakst, for Jean Rosenthal has substituted a simple dance-studio designed with the fresh austerity of a Frank Lloyd Wright. By a soaring flight of fancy Robbins has seen the faun as a dancer, has comprehended the narcissistic attitude of most dancers to life, and captured, in elegant terms, the sterilised emotional atmosphere surrounding ballet.

The faun is found contemplating himself in the studio "mirror", which by a thrilling stroke of theatre is represented by the proscenium arch.

A girl, the Nymph, enters and they rehearse a *pas de deux,* each totally absorbed in their own bodies. Unexpectedly the Faun suddenly kisses the Nymph, but she shies away and runs off. The Faun indolently resumes his interrupted contemplation. Whether his impulse was a speculative, experimental pass, or whether it resulted from a breath of pure emotion in the hothouse studio air, we shall never know. We peep through our stage-size keyhole and wonder. The choreography, leisurely paced and casually classical, makes better use of the Debussy music than I would have dreamed possible.

EXHIBITIONS: Left, in London at the opening of the Ballet Exhibition at the Army & Navy Stores, Anton Dolin holds up a statuette of himself. These "Oscars" are to be presented to those who have made the greatest contribution to ballet in a year. They are the work of sculptor Col. A. G. Grinling, seen on the left. Ballerina Toni Lander watches (Fox Photo).
Right, in Moscow another exhibition was held during an evening devoted to British ballet at the Central House of the All-Russian Theatrical Society, who organised it with the USSR-Great Britain Society. Visitors are looking at an exhibit which features Dance and Dancers *prominently (S.C.R. Photo).*

curtain up!

U.S.A. Culture for the U.S.S.R.

ONE of the most beloved of American artists in Britain is Nora Kaye. She was over here the other day but not to dance in London. Suddenly coming upon her in a well-known Walton Street restaurant with her partner, Scott Douglas, and choreographer Kenneth MacMillan, she told me that "in three hours we leave for Moscow". Unaware that any American ballet company was about to appear in Russia, I said, "But what on earth for — a holiday or something?" "No, dear, I'm going to dance on the Ed Sullivan programme," came back the reply. All very surprising but the answer is simple really.

It seems that the Soviets turned down the visits of Ballet Theatre, New York City Ballet and Robbins' Ballets: U.S.A., for the time at any rate, but were just crazy to see America's top TV show. After having looked at 4½ years of Sullivan programmes they made their choice of what they thought were the best numbers. Amongst those they chose were Risë Stevens of the Metropolitan Opera, Marge and Gower Champion and Nora Kaye and Scott Douglas. The two latter were to dance in a *pas de deux* by Herbert Ross and in costumes that they were apparently devising for themselves on the plane — consisting of loans from Dolin and embellishments from Woolworth's. The Russians, it seems, are to get a curious notion of American culture especially as this programme is presumably in part exchange for their own Bolshoi Ballet and other dance companies.

Help for Rambert

WHEN Ballet Rambert gave their recent London season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre the majority of reviews were enthusiastic enough to lull Madame Rambert into a sense of false security. The far-sighted critics, however, pointed out that the company was receiving inadequate financial support. The first on the grounds that the necessary encouragement of new and experimental choreography could hardly be carried out unless funds were provided. The second that the company was unable to keep all the ballets in its fine repertoire in first-class repair.

The L.C.C. has just awarded the company £2,000 a year. This sensible decision is a step in the right direction and everyone is extremely grateful. But some more steps will have to be taken in this direction if new works are to be staged. Let us hope that the Arts Council will see fit to increase its grant and thus show recognition of the company's immense contribution to British ballet.

Award time

IN Paris and New York they seem to be very keen on dishing out awards for this and that and at some time or other in their various careers every dancer and choreographer of note seem to find themselves clutching a statuette, a plaque, medal or certificate. In England we go in for these things with less fervour apart from the R.A.D.'s Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Award, which this year went to Frederick Ashton for the great service he has rendered to British ballet as a choreographer. Another British award coming up is the Anton Dolin Award (see picture above), which is to be given to the best male dancer, the best ballerina and the best choreographer in any year.

In Paris, however, such things are more forthcoming, and the critics recently gave awards to certain people who had taken part in this year's Paris Festival at the Théâtre des Nations. At a midnight ceremony at this theatre it was announced that Jerome Robbins, whose Ballets: U.S.A. appeared in the Festival, won the award for the best choreographer. Eduardo Serrano, the 17-year-old flamenco dancer of the Pilar Lopez company, received the award for the best male dancer while Mariane Orlando, of the Royal Swedish Ballet, was judged the best female dancer.

Hospitality from Capezio

THERE was a possibility that in spite of Ballet Rambert's very great success in America the company would not see New York. They entered and left America via Canada on their way to and from Jacob's Pillow. It was entirely due to the thoughtfulness of Ben Sommers, President of the famous shoe firm of Capezio and instigator of the annual Capezio Award, that this was put right. On one of the company's free Sundays, Mr. Sommers transported the company to New York by bus. In addition to lunching and dining with Violette Verdy and her mother, the dancers went back-stage at the Metropolitan Opera House, Radio City Music Hall, the roof of the RCA Building for a view of the city and a boat trip around the island of Manhattan.

Dancing holidays

WHAT do dancers do on holidays? For many of them, the answer is — dance. In darkest Africa, Royal Ballet dancers Merle Park and Gary Burne gave some performances while spending a holiday in their native Rhodesia. Also to Africa went another Royal Ballet group consisting of Doreen Wells, Christine Beckley, Graham Usher and Petrus Bosman. In Kenya they gave several performances of classical *pas de deux* and more modern works suitable for four dancers. The audience in Kenya is none too easy to win over to ballet but the dancers played to packed houses and proved to be such a success that they have been asked to go again next year. Even the most hard-bitten soon capitulated, and the quartet enjoyed a success as great as that

gained there by Markova and Dolin about a decade ago.

Other dancers of the Royal Ballet journeyed to Spain where they appeared at the Granada Festival in a programme organised by Alfred Rodrigues. I hear that the Spanish food did not suit all of them, which cannot have helped them to benefit from the rest of their holiday.

While we naturally applaud the work that these people are doing, especially in showing fine dancing in remote corners of the globe where a full company is unlikely to play, it is to be hoped that these holiday appearances do not become overdone. Perhaps some advice from Swedish dancer Caj Selling might not come amiss. He has been in London — doing nothing. He had been ordered a complete rest as he had hurt his ankle. "My first real holiday for three years," he told me. "Of course, it's much harder to get back into form after a complete break, but when you've done so you dance all the better for the rest."

Ireland for the Irish

FOR their appearance at the Dublin International Theatre Festival, immediately following the end of their season at Festival Hall, London's Festival Ballet have announced the world première of a new work on an Irish theme, to be called *Full Moon for the Bride.*

If the Irish theatre audiences are still as hot-tempered as they were in the famous days of the Abbey Theatre, I hope for the dancers' sakes that this new work will be more typical of Irish life than their recent offering was of present-day London life. If not, I foresee a riot at the first performance.

The anonymous guest

IT is not often that the audience sees a guest dancer who is not a celebrity, and even less often that the guest is not acknowledged on the programme. But due to the printing dispute and desperate shortage of girls who could do *fouettés,* this happened at the first night of Festival Ballet's *Graduation Ball.* Jill Bathurst, an Australian dancer from the Borovansky Ballet, who has been appearing in *The Land of Smiles,* helped the company out by whirling into the "*fouetté* competition" at the eleventh hour. Each night after the "Flute Dance" at the London Coliseum, she has to rush off to Festival Hall by cab and do two sets of 24 *fouettés,* plus another eight, and a dozen or so more turns in the finale.

The Russians can spin

WHEN writing about the Bolshoi season in America, Winthrop Sargeant of the *New Yorker* pointed out that a number of ballet critics complained about the absence of the famous 32 *fouettés* from the "Black Swan" *pas de deux* in *Swan Lake,* and even hinted that the Russians did not include this passage because they couldn't do them. "This," writes Sargeant, "seemed to have struck the company like a hurled gauntlet, and I am told that subsequent performances of *Swan Lake* were filled with *fouettés,* not only on the part of its prima ballerina, but among its lesser dancers as well, proving that the Bolshoi can out-*fouetté* any other company in existence."

happy birthday to...

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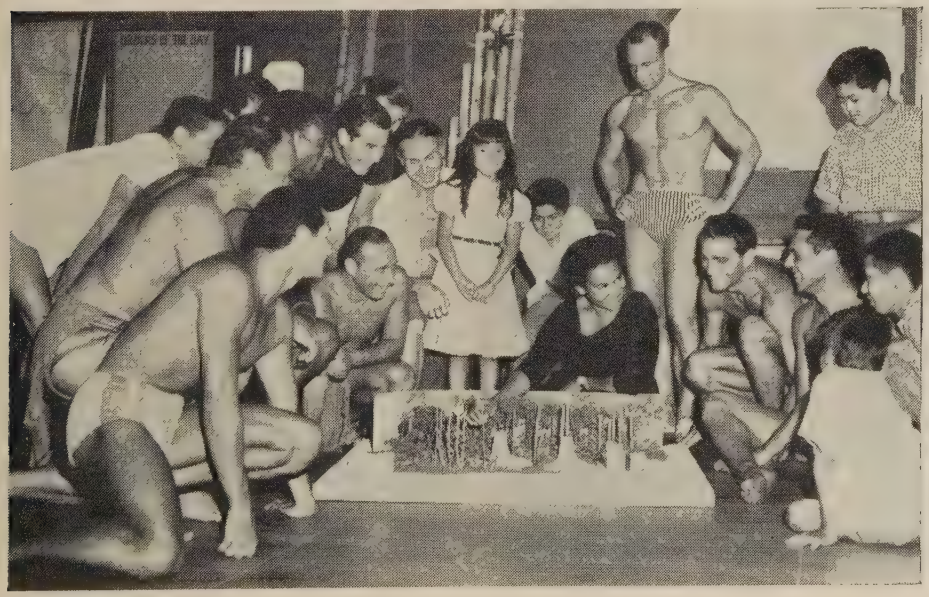
THE THOROUGHNESS OF DUNHAM: No, this this not an advertisement for swimwear, but Katherine Dunham showing the dancers, with whom she worked on the film Green Mansions, *a miniature setting of the deep jungles of South America. She did this so that they could get to know the sort of terrain in which they would be working.*

Photo: M.G.M.



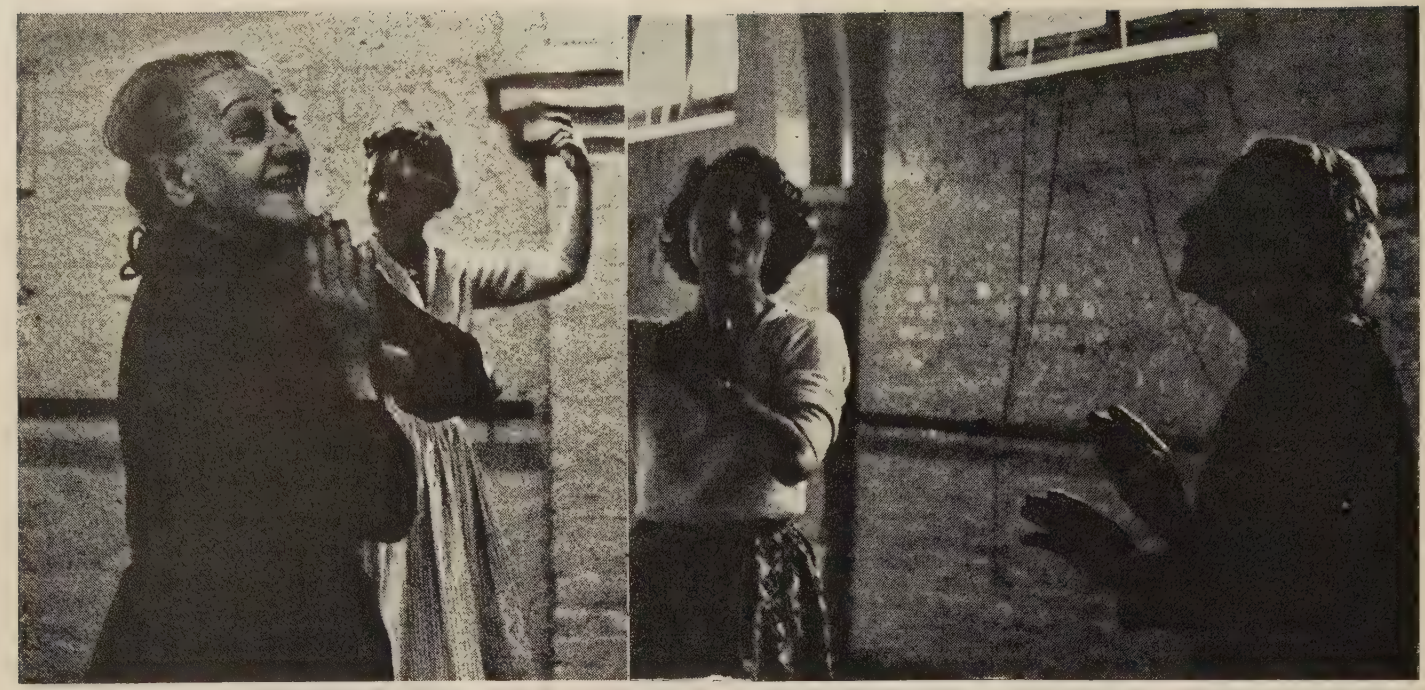
Dancer of Today

CARLA FRACCI

BORN in 1936 in Milan. Her first teacher was Edda Martignoni, and later she studied with Ettorina Mallucchelli until she went into the school of La Scala, Milan, where she worked under the principal teacher, Esmée Bulnes. Joined the corps de ballet *of La Scala, and was promoted to the rank of soloist 1956, becoming a star a year later. Last year she made her first appearance in Britain, dancing with the Edinburgh International Ballet and later London's Festival Ballet, and she joined the company as guest artist in May of this year. Also this year she has received the Italian prize "Leopardo d'Oro" for Ballet. Rôles include: Giselle in* Giselle; *Mazurka in* Les Sylphides; *Cinderella in* Cinderella; *Sugar Plum Fairy in* Nutcracker; *Juliet in* Romeo and Juliet; *the Wife in* Secrets; *Belle Rose in* Prince of the Pagodas; Harlequinade Pas de Deux; *and also in* Sebastian, Jeux des Cartes *and* Mario et Il Mago.

IT must have been John Cranko who first told us about Carla Fracci, after she had danced Belle Rose for him in *The Prince of the Pagodas.* His enthusiasm for her dancing led him to choose her for a leading rôle in *Secrets,* which was produced last year for the Edinburgh Festival. After a marked success in this, she came south to London and partnered by Mario Pistoni appeared at Festival Ballet's Gala Performance, immediately scoring a decided hit.

At the moment she is a correct and extremely charming dancer, with a natural exuberance, and a somewhat English style of dancing. With her attractive line and marked musical response she is obviously a most attractive acquisition for the company's London season.



KARSAVINA REHEARSES: Tamara Karsavina, the great Russian ballerina, demonstrates the movements of her version of Les Millions d'Arlequin *to Maria Balinska (in the picture on the left) and to Barbara Vernon (in the picture on the right).*
Photos: John Blomfield.

Harlequin on the road again

JOHN GREGORY tells of his group of young dancers who will tour various clubs, schools, colleges and Art Societies during the next few months.

THIS year, during which we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea, we felt the time had come to take a step further on the way towards our ultimate objective, so we have launched this young apprentice company to take ballet to arts societies, music clubs, schools and colleges, and in fact anywhere where ballet is wanted.

During these ten years I and some of my associate schools have produced a handful of promising material whose potential it would be a pity to lose, though of males we are woefully short. We shall not be an experimental group; we are merely following in a great tradition.

DIRECTORS PREPARE: Left. Barbara Vernon passes on a movement from Karsavina's ballet to a pupil. Right, John Gregory correcting a lift. *Photos: John Blomfield.*

We shall start with a repertoire of our own newly-devised ballets, and we are planning to introduce an historical programme that will sketch the passage of the dance from the early Court dances up to the 19th century social dances.

The name Harlequin seemed a particularly apt title for a struggling effort, because Harlequin appeared upon the scene when theatre art was struggling to exist. He brought humanity, comedy and poetry into the crude theatre of the booth and the market place, and he survived all the perils of a fierce and turbulent age. I hope he will help us to survive.

In our repertoire I felt it was necessary to have a ballet in which Harlequin would appear. I did not have to look far for the ideal choreographer. I remembered entrancing mime classes our President, Madame Karsavina, had given, in which she taught scenes from the Petipa ballet *Les Millions d'Arlequin*. To my great joy Madame Karsavina agreed to make the ballet during our Congress Week in May, and in four rehearsals she turned out the most delightful miniature ballet.

I was amazed at her incredible memory (she revived Columbine's variation exactly as she used to dance it in Russia), at her fine sense of construction, and the ease with which she speedily fashioned and improvised to suit the needs of our limited resources.

In contrast to this ballet will be the austere style and mood of Angelo Andes' dramatic work to Schubert's music, entitled *The Snake and the Dragon*. Barbara Vernon's Pergolesi ballet, as yet untitled, will match the lyrical flowing style of the Russian school with the elegance of this enchanting music. Maria Balinska will offer a modern short work in a sophisticated vein, using music of Debussy. My own contribution will be a romantic extravaganza to Rachmaninov's soulful melodies, and a gay eccentric comedy to Jaques Ibert's witty caprices.

THE ROYAL BALLET at The Granada, Sutton

(continued from last month)

THE Sutton audience also had no hesitation in showing what they thought of the other *pas de deux* at the Saturday matinée, and gave Lynn Seymour and Donald Britton quite an ovation for their dancing in *Don Quixote*. Seymour was tremendous in this showpiece of bravura classicism. With no inhibitions whatsoever she threw herself into the *pas de deux*, held the stage magnificently, and made even her mistakes in the true grand manner. Her dancing had the individually plastic quality, and passionate ebb and flow, that made her first Covent Garden appearance in *Swan Lake* so remarkable. There is a wonderful spontaneity about her phrasing which makes her slight tendency towards untidiness almost, but far from quite, forgivable. Possibly the most serious problem at the moment facing her is to curb her exuberance of movement without destroying it, but if her dancing physically needs more self-discipline, equally her facial expression needs less, for at the moment it seems too restricted in range and emotional colouring. Unlike most dancers she expresses more through her body than through her face. In a sense this is perhaps a fault in the right direction, yet in time she must learn to use both equally.

Donald Britton is not a classical dancer either pure or simple, and on the face of it he had no right to be as effective in this *pas de deux* as he undoubtedly was. He danced so brilliantly that one quite forgot that strictly he was using the wrong choreographic accent. It was a wilful, highly-strung performance that seemed particularly well matched to his ballerina's, and the final result was unconventional and stimulating. It would be a rare collector's item to see this pair dance *Don Quixote* on the same programme as Nerina and Blair, and to watch two such very different ways of setting off the blue touchpaper of choreographic fireworks.

One last note about bands and bandsmen: the performances of *Swan Lake* conducted by John Lanchbery were far better than those normally played at Govent Garden, yet the two repertory performances conducted by Mr. Lanchbery's associates were well down to the Covent Garden level. I also noticed that this branch of the Royal Ballet has the common sense to call *Swan Lake* simply *Swan Lake*, and does not perpetuate Covent Garden's solecism of referring to *Le Lac des Cygnes*. Is this really a change of heart or merely a superbly class conscious feeling that Australian diggers and provincial hicks don't speak French?

C. B.

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET at the Royal Festival Hall

A Decade After

FOR ten years Festival Ballet has been battling against great odds. It started off with a company surrounding two great stars — Markova and Dolin — plus Natalie Krassovska, John Gilpin and a number of highly promising soloists and an enthusiastic *corps de ballet*. It is greatly to the credit of Anton Dolin and Julian Braunsweg that in spite of innumerable worries — finance and a lack of any outside support not being the least — it has battled through. How successfully it has battled through is shown by the huge success and critical acclaim the company enjoys on its overseas tours and the fact that it is able to play two capacity months, plus a Christmas two-week season thrown in, each year in London at Festival Hall. This is a really fine achievement.

The only trouble is that this lack of a State subsidy and of a school, plus this continual battling, has meant that apart from a few notable exceptions the personnel of the company has shifted around with the regularity of a Bank Holiday crowd at Waterloo Station. The result is that the opening programme of their present season, on July 14, showed very little progress on what they first offered in Southsea some ten years ago. In fact I very much doubt whether ten years ago they would ever have shown a work such as their 10th Anniversary offering, *London Morning*, but that is another story and dealt with in full on other pages. The remainder of the programme consisted of two old Fokine standbys, *Les Sylphides* and *Prince Igor*, plus the *Don Quixote pas de deux*.

Ten years ago we should not have had so tired a performance of *Les Sylphides* as we were given on this particular night. It really remained for Krassovska, in the *Prélude*, to give any of the moonlit fantasy which Fokine originally intended; that otherworldliness, that feeling that the Sylphide was about to take flight and that she was surrounded by other Sylphides floating about in the lower air. Markova always create this impression and so does Krassovska. The rest seemed distinctly earthbound and not even particularly interested in their own earth. Gilpin, as always, danced impeccably in the *Mazurka* and in the *pas de deux* with La Scala's young ballerina, Carla Fracci. but even he did not seem entirely concerned with the poetry of the occasion. Fracci is a lovely dancer with a beautiful line (she is also a notable acquisition in a British company), but in her *Valse* and in the *Valse pas de deux* she still lacked complete understanding of Fokine's intentions. No doubt this will come with time and then she will be formidable. Mary Duchesne rushed the first *Mazurka* and caused it to lose any significance whatsoever. She appeared to be off the beat all the time, which was surprising from one who usually seems to be a dancer of musicality. The *corps de ballet* went through their paces and this is all that could possibly be said of them.

They also went through their paces in the final ballet of the evening, *Prince Igor*, with equal lack of concern. The rest of the cast were almost the same as the one assembled for Festival Ballet's revival nearly ten years ago. Anita Landa, then as now a splendid artist, was both ferocious and affectionate as the chief Polovtsian Girl. Janet Overton looked every inch a Captive Persian Princess. Vassilie Trunoff, the Chief Polovtsian, had lost (temporarily, we hope) a great deal of his original fire and speed. At one time he played this rôle with real feeling of Tartar blood coursing through his veins as one imagines must have been the prerogative of the rôle's creator — Adolf Bolm. Today it seems that his years in Australia have watered down that blood with some beverage from under the Southern Cross. Nor does he seem to play the part of the Chieftain, whipping his subjects up into a frenzy, with anything like his original natural exuberance.

Before this we had Krassovska and André Prokovsky in that old showpiece of virtuosity from Minkus's *Don Quixote*. It was danced with style and bravura by her with great *élan* by him. His beats, turns and elevation are prodigious, but I do wish that he would finish everything cleanly. It is sad to see such technique almost going for nothing owing to untidiness.

The second programme, on July 21, brought back *Swan Lake* Act 2 and *Etudes* in addition to the second cast of *London Morning*. When Dolin used to dance with Markova in the single act of *Swan Lake* I can never remember that it was as pointless and meaningless as it has now become. I have always believed that any foot placed upon the stage before an audience should be placed with purpose however futile that purpose might appear. Nobody in Festival Ballet's version of the second act of the Tchaikovsky/Ivanov masterpiece seems conscious of this fact. Swans and huntsmen are there for no reason other than to fill the stage. Yet, there was one exception — Mary Duchesne. She alone appeared to realise what her function was as one of two leading swans. In an extraordinary version of the dance for these two principal creatures, she brought a flash of meaning back into the whole thing. Marilyn Burr was Odette but though she has a beautiful line and sure technique she has not come to grips with the rôle at all. No bird she, nor princess neither! Her grandeur is false because it is entirely superficial and does not appear to come from the heart. Her Prince was Jean-Pierre Alban and a very strong partner he makes. But he too has scant idea of the meaning of his rôle. He poses around the stage with his feet in *dégagé* positions and one arm across his torso and no idea whatsoever of the correct stance of a Prince, even if he is also a ballet dancer. His miming is a series of meaningless gestures — such as when he first espies the arrival of the bird-Princess from afar — which never seemed to be deeply "felt".

It would seem that nobody has been produced in this work. It is, after all, far more than just a *divertissement*, for even in this single act there is a strong and complete story.

The final work of the evening was a revival of Harald Lander's effective showpiece — *Etudes*. It was good to see Toni Lander back again in a ballet in which she is matchless and in which she gives one of the most remarkable exhibitions of virtuosity in any ballet of the present day. But somehow the work as a whole seems to have become a bit stale. The *corps de ballet* were mechanical and lacked much of their former exuberance which always, in the past, blurred some of their technical shortcomings. Gilpin was brilliant and elegant as ever though he too tends to become rather mechanical. His opposite number is now André Prokovsky who, though a dancer with tremendous facility, manages to project a completely disinterested personality. I missed terribly the elegance of Flemming Flindt in this part and I missed the feeling of competition that used to go on between him and Gilpin. It was one of the most heartening sights in British ballet to see these two dancers trying to outdo each other. Sometimes it was uncertain who was really the principal male protagonist. Today there is no question — it is Gilpin — and Prokovsky tags along some way behind.

P. W.

Lander in Two Moods

ALTHOUGH one of the most pleasing aspects of the first week of Festival

Ballet's summer season was clearly the return of Toni Lander to the company's fold, her first appearance was unaccountably delayed until the Saturday matinée of July 18, when she danced the *Don Quixote pas de deux* — for the first time in London, I fancy — with André Prokovsky. Despite the brilliance she shows in *Etudes,* one would not perhaps have expected great things of her in this bravura *pas de deux.* And one would have been wrong.

For all her virtuosity she remains a soft, rounded dancer, in most ways a typical product of the Franco-Danish Bournonville school. Her *ports de bras* have a charmingly colloquial quality quite different from the more formal utterances of Russian arms. She is a dancer of lustre rather than brilliance, and even the most showy feats in her technical armoury are given with such a bewildering ease that they almost pass unnoticed, as if she was self-effacingly determined not to be sensational. She is much more of a ballerina than a star.

Her dancing in this *pas de deux* proved pure delight. It showed how well this Bournonville dancer has assimilated the international style and yet somehow made it her own, giving it a unique flavour. She approached this *pas de deux* without any flamboyance, dancing with effortless smoothness, phrasing and accenting steps with an exciting awareness of the music. Her solo was especially enjoyable; instead of flashing through with mock heroics, she danced here with a wry humour. Prokovsky did not make the most gallant of partners, and while his performance was several degrees preferable to the one he gave on the first night, he is hardly the most couth of dancers, even though he scores heavily with his eagerness to please.

On the same programme Ivan Baptie and Mary Duchesne gave their first London performances in the leads in *Les Sylphides.* Baptie is a naturally elegant dancer, with good feet and a pleasantly modest manner. His phrasing is at the moment not very good, and his *ports de bras* tend to be careless. However, in future seasons, he should do well. Duchesne had been most unimpressive in *Les Sylphides* on the first night of the season. At this performance she also danced the *Valse,* but coupled with the *pas de deux,* and did not show much improvement. A naturally gifted dancer, she seemed completely at sea with Fokine's romanticism, and was using her arms without any apparent thought of their relationship to her body. Marilyn Burr gave a well-judged solo *Mazurka,* particularly notable for the arc-like swoop of her jumps.

On July 24, Carla Fracci danced the *Harlequinade pas de deux* for the first time in London, and came beautifully into her own. She is a very well-equipped dancer, and gave the part with a pleasantly unforced confidence and sense of holding something in reserve. The quite natural piquancy of her characterisation arose naturally from her dancing, and she was excellently backed up by a light and agile Gilpin dancing at the top of his form.

The same performance saw the revival of Michael Charnley's *Symphony for Fun,* looking in anything but mint condition. The company as a whole — dancing better this season than last — gave it plenty of extrovert zip, but the edge of the choreography has become blunted with time. It was also a pity that the shadowgraph effect with which the ballet always opened was abandoned at this performance. Anita Landa and Jeannette Minty pointed the humour well in the two leading female rôles, but Ronald Emblen appeared miscast in the solo "Blues" number created for Gilpin. His over-forceful dancing lacked the necessary fluency, even though he made part amends with a spirited appearance in the *finale.*

Napoli has never been the same without Toni Lander, and it was consequently a pleasure to welcome her back to the ballet on July 29. Five years have now passed since Harald Lander first produced this version of Bournonville's ballet for the company, and in those years many sad things have happened to it. Originally it was like an act of homage from Denmark's leading contemporary choreographer to his great predecessor. Lander had been at pains to give some conception of Bournonville's genius, but this has now been truncated into what is little more than a dance *divertissement,* in which very little of even the true style is retained. Very few of the dancers seem to realise that they are not appearing in a Russian classic, and the whole production looked messy and slap-happy. Here and there a dancer such as Louis Godfrey, however, gave some impression of knowing what to do, and in the case of Godfrey actually doing it. André Prokovsky dances the rôle of Gennaro with good humour and considerable *panache,* but no one could call it stylish.

It is ironical that this *Napoli,* with all its defects, should have the best Bournonville dancer of our day in its leading rôle, and the strange thing is that although Toni Lander has been out of Denmark for some eight years now, her mastery of its dance style seems actually to have increased. She knows just how to make this choreography look pretty, without once lapsing into archness or sentimentality. There is a purity about her movements, a total belief in what she is doing and a wonderful warmth of personality that all add up to a completely integrated interpretation.

A few days later, on July 31, Marilyn Burr and Vassilie Trunoff made their London débuts as Teresina and Gennaro in this ballet. While Burr cannot be compared to Lander, she made a brave attempt at a part which showed her elevation and poise to good effect. Perhaps even more interesting was Trunoff in this ballet. He has the right build for a Bournonville dancer, and jumps well, even if with too much apparent effort. His beaten steps were not nearly good enough, although his powerful *tours en l'air* and *pirouettes* were most impressive. If he could give his dancing more gentleness and *ballon* — at the moment it is too heavy-handed for *Napoli* — he might well become an adequate replacement for Flindt.

This *Napoli* programme ended with Lichine's *Graduation Ball,* a production never remarkable for its delicacy or tact. Anita Landa and Diane Westerman had the best of it as the principal junior pupils, but neither Keith Beckett nor Michael Hogan made much of the Leading Cadet and the Drummer respectively. Jill Bathurst — "a guest artist" brought over from *The Land of Smiles* at the Coliseum and unnamed on the programme — turned some neat *fouettés* in the Dance Step competition, but it was really only Peter White's gouty General that had much of the spirit of Old Vienna about him.

C. B.

A Distressing Occasion

ON August 5, the Press were invited to see another performance which, apart from the *Harlequinade pas de deux* for Gilpin and Fracci, varied little from the season's opening night. Other cast changes, such as there were, were not for the better. Two Fokine ballets — *Les Sylphides* and *Prince Igor* — had the worst performances in living memory — or at least in my memory and that goes back for about forty years. In the *Sylphides* cast, the only change from the first night was Pamela Hart in *Prélude* and a nameless conductor who administered the orchestra with such rollicking pace and in such an insensitive way that he should also be headless. Altogether a most dismal occasion which was not made less so by those who ought to have known better. But this was as nothing to what happened to those poor old Polovtsian dances. A less effective orgy I never saw. Joan Potter, as the Polovtsian Girl, blurred every movement to a point of total absurdity while, apart from a few turns, André Prokovsky in the principal male rôle did nothing other than slouch about the stage. He could not even be bothered to whip his fellows into the most tepid of frenzies — the very least he could have done I should have thought. Compared to all this, *London Morning* appeared to be a sort of masterpiece.

There is one absolute essential for the dancer taking the female rôle in the *Harlequinade pas de deux,* and that is an innate sense of coquetry. Dancers such as Pavlova could achieve it to a flicker of an eyelid, keeping that balance between coy-sickening and coy-charming. Both Belinda Wright and Dianne Richards have made commendable attempts and almost succeeded as Columbine in this particular *pas de deux.* Carla Fracci, though charming, has not yet understood this elusive quality — smiles and playful gestures are not enough. She danced as well as we have come to expect from this enchanting Italian ballerina. Gilpin made a mercurial Harlequin but seemed to be straining for effect until the moment came when he could let himself go in the inevitable series of *pirouettes.* Both artists did their best to bring this evening to some tiny point of distinction but as they were immediately followed by the aforesaid *Prince Igor* their efforts were in vain.

Nothing could be more heartening to Julian Braunsweg, Anton Dolin and the company than to see 3,000 people nightly packing into their London performances. Financially it makes up for what they are reported to lose on provincial tours and it must also give them a sense of temporary security. Artistically these moments when they "get it good" are also the most dangerous. They may feel that those who adversely criticise their performances are cads and rotters, and anyway who cares if the public pay to come in and then come in their thousands? This is not, of course, the point at all. All of us have admired the company for what they have done over the past ten years, for the way they have managed to keep going and for having brought ballet to a huge new public. But there are moments when it is best not to keep silent. When I read in the programme that the aim of the company is to "give Britain and its ballet-loving public a ballet company which would preserve the traditions, present the great classics and offer an opportunity for well-controlled new productions", then I begin to wonder if the company really knows where it is going. No tradition was preserved in those horrifying performances of *Les Sylphides* and *Prince Igor,* Festival Ballet's own tradition least of all. In the past the company has given both works with all the loving care that could be bestowed on them, so there really seems no excuse for what has happened, especially as they still amount to a splendid band of dancers. It is wonderful to be able to dance to 3,000 people each night but it is no more difficult to see that the works are properly

presented, in something like the manner in which they were created by unquestioned masters of the past, than it is to put on the spectacle I saw on August 5. It would seem that the entire repertory needs overhauling and re-producing if the company is to retain the position that the programme claims for it.

It should be remembered that the above reports apply only to the first few programmes of the season. It may be that when the company has settled down things will improve. It may also be that the presence of this season's two distinguished guests — Alicia Markova and Yvette Chauviré — will give the company a new awareness of what ballet is all about.

P. W.

MARINA SVETLOVA GALA CONCERT

WHEN I arrived at the Gaumont State, Kilburn, on July 4, I was intrigued to see that among the Press "tributes" which Marina Svetlova quoted on her throwaway was one from myself. It read: "Danced in a way I shall never forget to my dying day." As this, while true, is somewhat pleasantly ambiguous, let me elaborate.

Marina Svetlova — described outside the theatre as "America's favourite ballerina"— gave a mediocre display. Her technique, although sound, is in no way outstanding. Her personality tends to be coy and her style is vulgar and not very pleasing.

She was well-partnered by Kenneth Melville, whose solo dancing gave most pleasure in a moderately dreary evening. Margit Muller — also partnered by Melville — danced in the *Black Swan pas de deux* in a way that was rather cheap, yet honestly flamboyant, and consequently, on its own terms, enjoyable.

A Negro dancer, Sylvester Campbell, gave the male *Bluebird* variation and showed a somewhat untidy technical finish. However, in a solo choreographed by himself and set to Duke Ellington music, he jumped prodigiously, and danced with supple athleticism. If he could improve the details of his technique and curb that untidiness he could become a notable dancer. Recently at the Hintlesham Festival I understand that Jack Carter choreographed a new ballet for him called *The Dark Angel.*

Returning to the "Grand Ballet Gala Concert" at Kilburn, much of the rest of the programme was occupied by an apparently Spanish lady, Lutys de Luz. I will remember the dreariness of this dancer to my dying day as well. **C. B.**

SIX CHOREOGRAPHERS

THERE comes a time when what was modern yesterday is old-fashioned today. I recalled this watching a programme called *Six Choreographers* at the Emma Cons Hall in Morley College on July 8. The six choreographers in question were John Broome, Richard Browne, Eileen Cropley, Sigurd Leeder, Ludmila Mlada and Jane Winearls, the last-named being primarily responsible for the programme presentation.

All except Richard Brown were working in what is called the "modern dance idiom", and there was nothing startling or original to be seen in the whole programme.

John Broome's *The Blind People* — a modern "miracle play" involving dancing, mime, singing and speech — was both the most interesting and perhaps even the most promising. But Broome appears to have little technique as a choreographer and his work emerged as pretentious and, at times, giggle-making.

A VISITOR FROM ITALY : John Gilpin with Carla Fracci in Les Sylphides. *Fracci, a ballerina of La Scala, Milan, has leave of absence to dance with London's Festival Ballet until the end of this year.* *Photo : Mike Davis.*

The rest were all much of a muchness, except that it was obvious that Sigurd Leeder and Ludmila Mlada had infinitely more professional know-how than their colleagues, and their works were always well produced.

I would dearly like to see a flourishing non-academic dance tradition in England, but programmes like these make me pessimistic for the future. Until we can produce *leaders* of the calibre of Graham, Humphrey and Limón, it seems to me that our modern dance is never going to live up to its name.

C. B.

THE HINTLESHAM FESTIVAL

A New Carter Work

DARK ANGEL, a new creation by Jack Carter, received its world première on July 24 at the Hintlesham Festival. One can hardly call it a ballet, for this eight-minute work danced to the music of Sibelius's *Swan of Tuonela* might best be described as an extended *pas seul,* so little have the other four dancers to do. The story, taken from *Kalevala* (the Finnish national epic), tells of a woman's struggle to cross the river which divides heaven and hell, the guardians of which are the Black Angel and his three attendants.

One imagines that the choreographer composed the work specially for the young Negro dancer Sylvester Campbell, who danced the Black Angel, for there are frequent opportunities for this talented youth to display his extraordinary *développés* (which almost come into the slow high-kick class) and his innate sense of rhythm. Watching Campbell one feels that here is a person born to dance, and one can only hope that the ballet will not lose him to the more highly-paid world of musicals and cabaret. He is as yet immature, like a young colt, but the promise is there and should not be long in maturing. He should, however, pay particular attention to his hands; they tend to flap and spoil the rest of his work.

As the woman Margit Muller had little

to do, but did it well. Her *pas de deux* with Campbell, though short, had a lyrical quality that was fully brought out, and one wished that the structure of the music had allowed for an elaboration of the dance.

The same programme also included several *divertissements,* excerpts from *Les Sylphides,* and the Odette-Odile dances from Acts II and III of *Lac des Cygnes.* Perhaps it was because the stage was obviously very slippery, or because part of the programme was given during daylight hours and thus robbed of any illusion, but I cannot recall ever having seen a more tortured-looking Swan Queen than Margit Muller, or anyone quite as arch in the rôle of Odile (though she was worse in the *Beau Danube pas de deux* that preceded it). She is an accomplished technician and it was a pity her performance was marred by such grimaces. **Bernard Peacock.**

BALLET IN THE PARK

The Hilde Holger Modern Ballet

NO doubt there are many who suppose that the ballet critic's life is one continuous round of frivolous joy spent at Festival Hall or, occasionally, on the discussion of such serious subjects as to how we can best preserve the classics as a standard for future generations — over, of course, short drinks in the Crush Bar at Covent Garden, But to have to pull oneself together to face, with many premonitions, a long bus journey to Waterlow Park or Streatham Common, where the Hilde Holger Modern Group has been romping about the landscape, may convince some readers that a critic has duties which cannot be regarded as Roman sports.

Admittedly the Holger comany is one of the most enterprising modern groups and it merits encouragement. Entertainment seems to be its sole aim, and in striving to please its audiences it goes to extremes.

Abstract modern dance to Handel and Bach, folk motifs to Dvorák, decorative impressionistic dance to Ravel, Peter Warlock ballads danced and punctuated by a narration, *Egypt 2000 B.C.,* to Verdi's *Aida* ballet music, *Under the Sea* (Saint-Saëns), and two light pieces, *Old Vienna,* featuring a dancing master, a flower seller, dandies, and so on, and a work to Gershwin. The most elaborate work was *Dawn of Life* to a specially commissioned score by Thomas McLelland Young. Conceived on a mammoth canvas and starting with cells multiplying and the evolution of plant life, the work culminated in a ritual dance led by a group of huntsmen.

But although Hilde Holger has many original ideas, the overall effect on me of such a programme was that if she had only staged half the items, she would still have been too ambitious. It is, moreover, almost impossible to get good results from mediocre dancers. If, however, one has superb production something may still be achieved. But on a bouncy stage in the open air, with inadequate lighting, no curtain, and stage-hands bringing down the house whenever they moved a bench, almost any type of presentation is impossible.

Despite a lack of flavour and style, a number of the items were pleasant and inconsequential, and the worst, even at their most torpid and meandering moments, were not bad enough to arouse hostility. I was not at all surprised that applause was in inverse ratio to the quality of the dances — the lighter, more trivial numbers were enthusiastically received, while the more carefully staged serious items received little but yawns. On the whole, the audience, a large one, seemed to be enjoying the programme immensely. Obviously their tastes were less jaded than mine. **E. C. M.**

HERMA DIAZ

Spanish Dances Grave and Gay: 20th Century Theatre on June 26 and 27.

THE title of this programme hinted at a seriously planned show of folk dances and, once the curtain rose, it was plain that sincerity was not lacking. The company consists of part-time students of Spanish Dance, mostly pupils of Miss Diaz, and the programme was made up of classical, regional and Flamenco numbers, to piano or guitar music.

Apart from Miss Diaz, who danced with intensity and technical command, the group — excepting Antonio Moreno — performed with that calculated negligence that the over-confident amateur displays in this country in performances of opera, drama or dance. They gave what they thought was their best, but on the whole it was a best not really good enough for the choreographic material.

Antonio Moreno, who looked, moved and acted like a real Spanish dancer, spoiled half his potential effects by projecting a nervous arrogance which won no sympathy from at least one spectator. Setting, lighting and stage-management were unhelpful to anybody.

The programme was boldly planned and deserved a presentation such as the combined talents of its performers could not quite compass. Six months' rehearsal might work wonders.

The present vogue for studying Spanish dancing — as a welcome change from all that ballet — has caught on in Evening Institutes and similar places. It is a healthy diversion and deserves encouragement. Miss Diaz's group is trying to break new ground — but it needs sharper spades and neater footwork. **A. V. Coton.**

TELEVISION

DURING summer, despite the vast output of television programmes, ballet items disappear almost entirely, and not even the dancers who are friends of the producers are seen on the screen. Some weeks back we saw Marjorie Tallchief and George Skibine in a brief extract from Ruth Page's *Vilia* on BBC television. This poor material wasted the talents of two good dancers, who had the misfortune of appearing against one of the ugliest sets seen for some time. Not even Wendy Toye could infuse style into this unstylish piece of choreography.

On June 14, Yvette Chauviré and David Blair danced the Act 2 *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake* in a BBC *Music for You* programme. It was competently performed, but apart from Chauviré's unusual opening pose — in which she lies on the stage with one leg extended in *arabesque* almost vertically and the other drawn up underneath that leg — it was not remarkable in any way.

The BBC's production of July 9 of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* in mime devised by Jacques Lecocq and performed by that maid-of-all-work, Gillian Lynne, received plenty of enthusiastic advance publicity.

A striking feature of the production was that it was all in one style — albeit a plodding, heavy-breathing one. But while Margaret Dale is very knowing about the technical medium of television, I sometimes consider that she is not as understanding as she might be concerning the material she uses.

Peter and the Wolf is anything but a foolproof subject. Every moment of action has been dictated by the composer, and we have already seen one choreographer expose a reputation to ridicule in a fresh treatment of it. Frank Staff seems to have said the last word as long ago as 1940, and I assume that anyone who attempts a new version has not seen his ballet.

The actual mime created was ordinary and hardly above the level of charade. On the face of this it is difficult to comprehend Lecocq's alleged reputation in France and on French television. But while it would be ridiculous even to compare his work with Marceau's, a few of his ideas can sincerely be placed beside those of our English mime recitalists.

Gillian Lynne's predicament could be appreciated. Not only had she to act all the characters. She also had to provide the narration, and this she chanted ever so coyly and crisply. The set, composed of rostrums and planks against the orchestra, looked like phase one of an army obstacle course. Against this claustrophobic background she could have been Jean Valjean trapped in a sewer, or Marguerite in her gloomy cell.

The overall effect, that of arch and treacly naïvety, was a lot more unpleasing than one might imagine *Peter and the Wolf* could ever be. **E. C. M.**

London Morning

Given by London's Festival Ballet. Presented by Association-Rediffusion on Independent Television on August 3.

AS this "ballet" has already been more than adequately dismissed by the critics. I am spared the task of discussing it in detail. Its television production happened to be completely straightforward and this merely served the purpose of emphasising its blemishes, if that be not too strong a word. It was very well danced but, under such close scrutiny as the cameras provide, the principals proved a little less effective than on stage, and tense, would-be ingratiating smiles were switched on in almost every face in focus. The fact, too, that such rapt attention was given to Anton Dolin's old fogey made him appear to be more the hub of the ballet than he actually is.

The work somehow seemed to have shrunk to about half its size, despite the fact that the screen was absolutely cluttered. It was very obvious that too many characters had been used and it was frequently hard to tell one from another. But those who stood out at odd moments for various reasons were Janet Overton, Janet Kedge, Joan Potter and Geoffrey Davidson, by virtue of looking relaxed, Pamela Hart, for looking surly when everyone else smiled, and Dalton Davis for looking bored.

The stock caricatures were just so much passing traffic — stressing that there was no plot to be developed. If only something would happen! Couldn't Jean-Pierre Alban as the dandy, looking incredibly like a buck from *Our Miss Gibbs,* make love to the Streatham housewife? Couldn't Ronald Emblen distinguish himself by some tasteful action — such as snapping the elastic on the knickers of the chief schoolgirl?

In construction, the work is surely reminiscent of *Round the Town, On Brighton Pier* or *Our Crown* — old Empire ballets staged when Genée was in the flower of her youth. Such a comparison comes more readily to mind for, in this case without colour, the effect was infinitely less raucous but also more period. If it had been composed for the Great Exhibition of 1851 and one of the characters had gone up in a balloon, would any viewer have been astonished? **E. C. M.**

AMERICA

"Gagaku" at City Center

IN addition to producing *Episodes* during their recent New York season, the New York City Ballet also played host to the musicians and dancers of the Japanese Imperial Household. The word "gagaku" literally means "elegant and authorised music" and the term includes both classical dancing and singing as well as instrumental music. The Gala Première of Gagaku was a benefit for the Dance Collection of the New York Public Library and orchestra seats were $25 each. If this audience was supposed to be "friends of the dance", one shudders to think how enemies might behave because it acted in the rudest possible manner — whispering and talking through some of the quieter, slower sections of the Japanese dances and, almost invariably, applauding just too early or too late, thus breaking the spell and mood of almost the entire presentation. In later performances, however, these superb artists were accorded the respect, attention and applause they so richly merited. They proved, in fact, in their own subtle, elegant way, to be one of the most distinguished dance importations of the year and added immeasurably to the importance of the New York City Ballet's season.

These musicians and dancers performed on a raised stage, covered with green damask. The stage was surrounded by red-lacquered railings and parapets and there were black-lacquered steps both in the front and the rear. These railings obliterated a clear view of the dancers' feet for most of the audience sitting in the orchestra stalls, but the sumptuous silk and brocade costumes proved to be a considerable recompense. Actually, one had the feeling that the proper setting for this company was an imperial courtyard or in the grounds of a temple or a shrine.

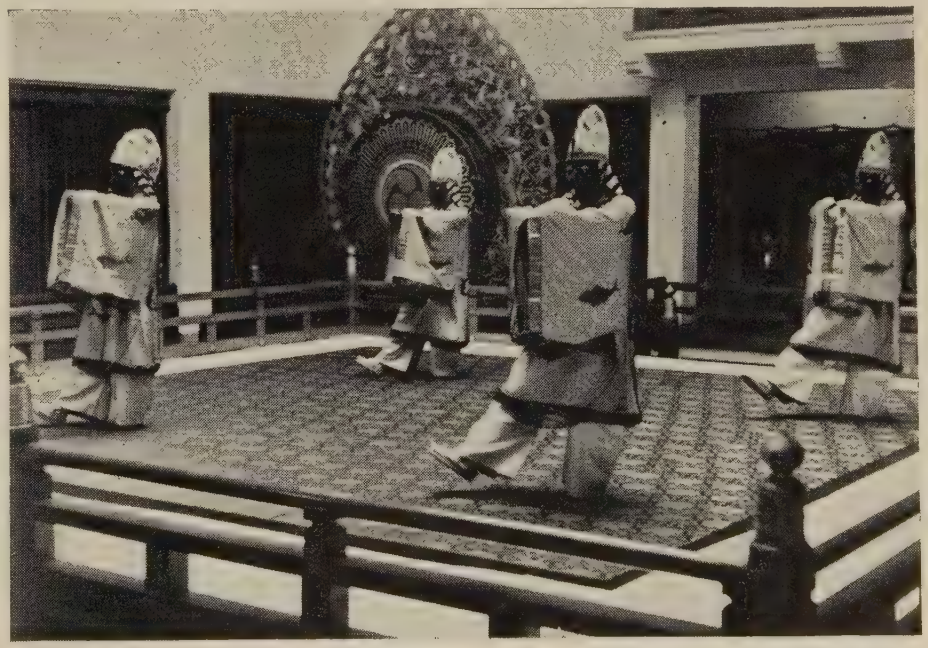
These Japanese artists, whose tradition stems from the seventh century, are almost the complete opposites of the Kabuki Theatre. The Gagaku deals in essences, subtle refinements, elegance, and what they do is performed more as a ritual than a theatrical dance. However, its simplicity, honesty and dedication are so deep that viewing them is an almost overwhelming experience that transports a willing viewer half-way around the world and back some twelve centuries in time.

The New York City Ballet

ALTHOUGH *Episodes* and the visit of the Gagaku were, understandably, the high points of the New York City Ballet's Spring-into-Summer season, it must be added that the company was in exciting form and in the general repertoire there was much that was noteworthy. Most outstanding, perhaps, has been the delicious presence of Violette Verdy who, indeed, is fast becoming a truly Balanchine dancer without losing a typically French accent that is all her own. She is always brilliant technically and, in addition, there is a wonderful Gallic charm and insouciance that bounces right across the footlights. Allegra Kent continues to be a joy to watch and it literally becomes an experience to see her dance almost anything at all. The same holds true of young Edward Villella, one of the stalwart young males of the company who made tremendous advances this past season from both a technical as well as a performing point of view. Here, indeed, is a young man who just *dances,* obviously enjoying it as much as the audience does, but who does it with a winning honesty and simplicity. Sallie Wilson is also developing into another young treasure in this company, and one only hopes that she will have far more to do in the coming season. Royes Fernandez, recently of American Ballet Theatre, who was to have joined the company in the Spring, was forced to postpone his appearances until the Autumn season due to a knee cartilage operation. He, too, should prove a welcome addition to the younger wing of this organization.

American Ballet Theatre

IN its only appearance this season, American Ballet Theatre valiantly mounted a single programme in outdoor Lewisohn Stadium, which must be by all odds the most dreadful setting for ballet in the United States. The stage was inadequate, the lighting even worse, and the décor, which consisted only of red and white "New York Is A Summer Festival" banners, could not have provided a more incongruous background, especially for *Les Sylphides.* Nevertheless, an audience of almost 10,000 turned out to cheer one of America's favourite companies and, indeed, there was much to cheer about. Especially, there were guest artists Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch in one of their best recent performances of *The Black Swan pas de deux.* Also, there were Sallie Wilson and Violette Verdy, who, respectively, distinguished themselves in the Waltz and Mazurka sections of *Les Sylphides,* and Erik Bruhn (passing through New York between engagements in Guatemala and Jacob's Pillow) was, as always, notable. Lupe Serrano gave a stunning performance in *The Combat* and Michael Lland, in his return



IMPERIAL DANCERS FROM JAPAN: The pictures above and below show the dancers of the Imperial Household, whose first appearance outside Japan was with the New York City Ballet at City Center.

to the company after a year's absence, though mis-cast, was welcomed in the rôle of the First Cadet in *Graduation Ball.*

American Ballet Theatre has announced that it has deferred its planned mid-winter tour of its new production of *The Sleeping Beauty.* Instead, this full-length ballet will be one of the major events during the 20th Anniversary Season at the Metropolitan Opera House next April. Lucia Chase has also announced that the Royal Danish Ballet's Erik Bruhn has been signed for this engagement and one rumour has it that Margot Fonteyn will also be invited. In the meantime, Erik Bruhn comes to New York in late November for appearances with the New York City Ballet.

New Library-Museum For Lincoln Center

HARD on the heels of the announcement that the New York City Center was planning to move to Lincoln Center in 1963 came the news that the New York Public Library is ready and willing to direct the Library-Museum at this center for the performing arts providing that financial arrangements can be made. Funds for this building, like the Theatre for the Dance, will still need to be raised. and it appears that this will chiefly be sought from the city and state of New York.

According to Edward G. Freehafer, director of the New York Public Library, this so-called new Library-Museum will be the repository "for one of the greatest collections of library material related to the performing arts". As such, it would comprise the Library's dance, music and theatre collections, which are estimated to be the most comprehensive in North America.

Latest Russian Dance Invasion In New York

DURING mid-July, impresario Sol Hurok had some 200 dancers, singers and musicians flown to America from Soviet Russia to appear in New York City's Madison Square Garden for a two-week engagement to coincide with the opening of the six-week Soviet Exhibition at the new Coliseum. Headed by Nina Timofeyeva and Yuri Zhdanov and Ludmila Bogomolova and Stanislav Vlasov of the Bolshoi Ballet, the dancers included members of the Moiseyev Troupe, the Georgian State Dance Company, the Kiev State Ballet, the Armenian State Dance Company and the Kazakh State Company as well as Galya Izmailova, of the Uzbekistan State Ballet; Tatiana Borovikova and Valery Panov, of Leningrad's Maly Theatre; plus the dancers with the Piatnisky Russian Folk Choir.

In its first week's programme, which is almost too lengthy to detail, the great successes were Ludmila Bogomolova and Stanislav Vlasov in Alexander Lapauri's *The Waltz,* Nina Timofeyeva and Yuri Zhdanov in a *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake,* the Georgian State Dancers and the Moiseyev and the lovely Galya Izmailova. The second week's programme, which had some changes, had as its highlight Bogomolova and Vlasov in *Spring Waters,* which is danced so beautifully that it leaves American audiences roaring for an encore.

Like previous Russian dance companies imported by Sol Hurok, this amalgamation won major acclaim from the New York City dance press and audiences, and, meanwhile, was filling Madison Square Garden (an unlikely spot for dance if there ever was one) at the estimated intake of $50,000 a performance. Say anything else you will, these Russians really *dance* and, if that's what's wanted, who could ask for anything more?

Dance In Central Park

WHILE the Festival of Russian Music and Dance was appearing at Madison Square Garden, André Eglevsky's *Ballet Divertissements* inaugurated New York City's Hudson Celebration in an outdoor theatre-in-the-round called "Theatre-In-The-Park", which is set in the cool greenery of Central Park with tall skyscrapers as a background. Headed by Eglevsky, Melissa Hayden, Lupe Serrano and Allegra Kent, this group also included Edward Villella, Eugene Tanner, Judith Green, Susan Borree and Ivan Allen. This three-evening programme highlighted six works: William Dollar's *The Duel* as well as two new works, *Pas de Six* to music by Fauré, and *Circus Life,* set to music by Suppé. The three other ballets, all choreographed by George Balanchine, were *A la Françaix,* the Minkus *Pas de Trois,* and the *Sylvia pas de deux.*

During the week of August 10, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo made one of its infrequent New York appearances here, and this will be reported in greater detail in our next issue.

Jerome Robbins' "Gypsy"

ANYBODY expecting a new landmark like *West Side Story* in this musical version of the early life of strip-tease dancer Gypsy Rose Lee and her sister, June Havoc, might well be disappointed. However, anyone looking for an almost perfect musical as far as plot, music, settings, characters and performances are concerned might term this

GEORGIAN DANCERS : Members of the Georgian State Dance Company who appeared in New York for the Festival of Russian Music and Dance at Madison Square Garden during July. They are to appear at the Albert Hall in London from November 9 to 25.

GYPSY :*Gene Castle, Stephen Curry, Billy Harris, Karen Moore and Jacqueline Mayron (in splits) in a dance number from Jerome Robbins' production of the musical* Gypsy, *based on the life of Gypsy Rose Lee.*

the best and most integrated musical of the season. Certainly, it provides Ethel Merman with the rôle of her career, and what Jerome Robbins has added, though little of it might be termed pure dancing, is so perfect and so right that it is almost unobtrusive, flowing naturally in and out of the action, always pointing it up, explaining the characters in another dimension and advancing plot, just as ideal choreography for a musical should. Chiefly, the dances and musical numbers here are all concerned with second-rate vaudeville and burlesque turns and each, in its way, is superbly right in style and mood. Aside from a young Astaire-like solo dance, "All I Need Is A Girl", which is as well composed as any of the male solos in *Fancy Free,* there is an hilarious number for three tired strip-tease dancers, "You Gotta Have A Gimmick", in which Maria Karnilova is clad chiefly in two big butterflies, the second bumps and grinds to the playing of her own trumpet while the third is electrically wired to light up at climactic moments in her routine. Also there is a wonderful moment where Jerome Robbins has showed the passage of time by giving young June and Gypsy a treadmill-like dance in a flickering spotlight with first one, then the other, being replaced by their adolescent counterparts. What is most remarkable of all, perhaps, is the way that this director-choreographer has caught the flavour and the essence of shoddy vaudeville and tawdry burlesque routines all from an era he never saw. Nevertheless he has captured and recreated it into a work of theatrical art. All of this takes an enormous and prodigious talent but, as we all know by now, that's exactly what Jerome Robbins has.

Michael Kidd's 'Destry Rides Again'

ONE of the big box office hits of the season is this musical version of the old Western film, *Destry Rides Again,* that starred Marlene Dietrich and James Stewart. Though its present casting is not so fortunate (Dolores Gray and Andy Griffith), it is so bright, brash and brassy that it becomes, rather, a Broadway idea of what a Western musical should be like. What director-choreographer Michael Kidd has done is to inject it with so much pace and bounce that is almost jittery. Never does the pace change nor is there anything really new or completely fresh from a choreographic point of view. Everything seems to fit together almost too slickly and this is particularly true of the bar-room dances. There are only two exceptions to this. One is a wonderful whip dance that is performed by three cowboys in black, and it is danced superbly by Marc Breaux (who also is programmed as assistant to Michael Kidd), Swen Swenson and George Reeder. Although this dance reminded me somewhat of the stunning number for four gauchos presented by José Greco some seasons back, it had quite a different application here. Then, too, there was the Act II opening number, "Are You Ready, Gyp Watson?", which was a sort of danced dirge before a possible lynching that was performed by the townspeople. This, in sections, had some of the quality and movement that one recalls in the revivalist scene in Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring.* The dancers, as in many Michael Kidd musicals, were superb. One only wishes that both they and Michael Kidd had something better to do.

DESTRY RIDES AGAIN: *Right, three pictures of the dances for the recent Broadway musical for which Michael Kidd did the choreography.*

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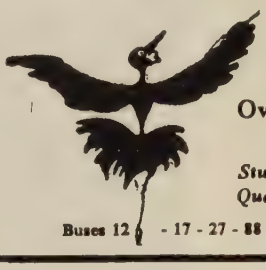

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Maria-Theresa

ALTHOUGH the past dance season in New York has been noteworthy for a variety of wonderful dancing ranging from the brilliance of the Bolshoi to the brassy brightness of Broadway, from the elegance of the Gagaku to the eternal drama of Martha Graham, a lone figure, Maria-Theresa, one of the six original Isadora Duncan "Isadorables" (a ghastly term for the children she trained), has been appearing in a series of solo performances at Dance Players' Studios in total disregard of current trends and tendencies. Dancing to the music of Chopin, Bach, Beethoven, Gluck, Wagner and Brahms, as did Isadora, a view of just one of these concerts indicates the antique significance of this form of dance which is so natural, so simple, so serene that it becomes as classical as a Greek column yet is both timeless and of now when it is performed by an artist. In her own heroic way Maria-Theresa proved to be a most interesting antidote to the Bolshoi while, at the same time, indicating again how deeply Isadora Duncan influenced Fokine and, indeed, much that stemmed from him since. **Arthur Todd.**

FRANCE

The Paris Opera

THE new Administrator has fortunately instituted a change of procedure. In future, rôles will be alternated. Thus, on May 10, Josette Amiel returned in *Entre deux rondes,* in which she succeeded Liane Daydé. She successfully captured the essence of the piece and there is a happy link between her very Degasesque interpretation and that of Solange Schwarz, who created the rôle.

The Opera-Comique

MAY 29 saw the opening of Jacques Chazot's *Fête Arlésienne,* which is based on Bizet's famous interludes. This work, which is very classical in form, is totally devoid of originality and imagination and follows the well-trod path of Aveline. However, Josette Amiel, who leads the company, brought some technical mastery and verve to the ballet.

On May 12, Jacqueline Rayet and Peter Van Dijk gave a second performance, remarkable for its musicality, of Van Dijk's *Unfinished Symphony.*

As the *corps de ballet* is to combine with that of the Opéra, the dancers were reclassified at the end of June.

Vijayanthimala

FROM May 26-30, India made its début at the Théâtre des Nations, represented by Mlle. Vijayanthimala, who subsequently appeared at the Scala Theatre in London. The excellent performances of such dancers as Ram Gopal, Mrinalini Sharabai, Indrani and others have already familiarised us with this school of dancing. They all paid due respect to the sacred significance and origins of this delicate art.

Vijayanthimala, however, has not done so. While she is the pupil of a great master or "guru", Dandayutha Pahi Pillai, and has learnt her Bharata-Natyam in a good school, her physical beauty has led her to the cinema, for which she has acquired glamour and an exaggerated allure. This greatly astonished her audience. While applauding her undeniable virtuosity, one cannot but deplore these concessions.

Her programme included some rather vulgar popular dances, burlesque interludes, and some items typical of a music hall turn with an eye to exoticism. Apart from an interesting singer, the orchestra included some Western instruments — another error of taste. Let us hope that the National Theatre of Bombay, which is due to appear from July 1-5, will obliterate this bad impression.

Marcel Marceau

DURING the past year, Marcel Marceau has made the romantic old Ambigu Theatre the shrine of Mime. He leads his company, in which he zealously performs the dual tasks of principal artist and teacher. The new programme, which he has just staged, shows the full flowering in quality of an art whose secrets he so bewitchingly draws forth and reveals to us. The programme, which is in turn amusing and moving, neither drags nor repeats itself.

In the first half, *pantomimes de style* predominate. Introduced by Pierre Verray and Alexandro, *The Billposter, The Fair* and *The Apache* are set off against Bip as a street musician, a seller of porcelain, and as a children's nurse. Gilles Segal gives his usual spirited interpretation of *The Shower* and, supported by Sabine Lods, of the charming *Conte* and *Le Mannequin.* But it is in *The Maker of Masks* that Marceau, by the simplest means, attains his full tragic stature. Every minutely studied gesture is heart-rendingly evocative.

The ambitious mime drama, *Paris qui rit, Paris qui pleure,* depicts the adventures of a window cleaner (Marceau) who becomes a newspaper seller. One night he dreams that he has won the national lottery, and he takes his fiancée on a triumphant flight to the moon, from which he brings back a thousand treasures. Alas, his dreams disappear in a whiff of smoke! Though his ticket wins, he no longer trusts his luck. No matter! The *quais* will hold his carefree nostalgia. The moving and poetic telling of this story belies its virtuosity.

The artists who support Marceau combine great precision with expressiveness. The highly imaginative scenery by Jacques Noël, one of the most gifted young designers, shows great flexibility in following the twists and turns of the plot. The Eiffel Tower is particularly well indicated. Joseph Kosma's score sets a suitable musical atmosphere for the work.

News in Brief

AT its traditional dance programme in June, the Casino d'Enghien presented Chauviré, Gerde Reinholm and the Milorad Miskovitch company.

THE Indonesian dancer, Lilavati, gave a well-received recital at the Comédie des Champs Elysées.

JOSEPHINE BAKER returned to the Olympia Music Hall in the revue *Paris mes amours,* which opened in May. George Reich is responsible for the choreography.

THE festival of Lyon-Charbonnière presented Ludmila Tcherina and Steven Grebel in Lifar's *Romeo and Juliet* and Milko Sparemblek's *Quatuor.*

Marie-Françoise Christout.

NEW ADMINISTRATOR: A-M. Julien, who was recently appointed General Administrator of the national theatres in Paris. This means that the Opéra and the Opéra Comique come under his control. Previously M. Julien was founder of the highly successful Paris Festival which continues throughout the summer at the Théâtre des Nations (Sarah Bernhardt Theatre). *Photo: Lido.*

Swedish Dancers in Bath

(Continued from page 17)

sions we know. Though badly danced, the "Florestan" *pas de trois* from *The Sleeping Beauty* seemed in certain changes superior to our Royal Ballet version. In the "Peasant" *pas de deux* from *Giselle* (Yvonne Sjöberg and Werner Klausen), the girl's solo to the slow waltz — slow turns *en diagonale* — was danced with the same steps, but supported by the boy. Again, in the opening *tempo di polacca pas de deux*, the girl drew her legs up underneath her in a kneeling position in the supported lifts. In this item, while the *soli* were danced pleasantly enough, all the *pas de deux* encounters were spoilt by fumbling and strained grappling.

Excerpts from *Swan Lake*, or rather almost the whole of the second act which incorporated the *pas de trois* from Act I with the peasant girls adorned in short swan tutus, were given against an appropriate, but rather bleak, back-projected décor by Barry Kay. Mariane Orlando (well-partnered by Caj Selling) was a somewhat unpassionate Odette. She has strong *pointes*, her line is clean, her extensions high, her back is fluid and often reminiscent of Grey, but there appeared to be an air of tough athletic prowess rather than emotional dedication about her approach to the rôle.

Elsa Marianne von Rosen and Björn Holmgren danced the *Don Quixote pas de deux* — again a version largely different from any we usually see. The programme credited it to having been taken from the Gorksy Moscow revival of 1902, and having been brought to Stockholm via Riga by Albert Kozlovsky, the company's ballet master, in 1949. Holmgren's solo, which suited him well, featured numerous multiple turns. The girl's solo was something of a bore, and von Rosen danced it as though it was a matter of life and death without actually succeeding in making it spectacular.

La Lithuanienne (1845) was made famous by Augusta Nielsen, who succeeded Grahn as solo dancer with the Royal Danish Ballet. The original choreography had been passed from generation to generation until Augusta Nielsen's descendant, Margrethe Brock-Nielsen, reproduced it for von Rosen in 1951. The choreography, which is by Lefebvre, is extremely simple, while Lumbye's music is pretty, bouncy and faintly military. It said much for von Rosen's effortless charm and beguiling personality that she could make this almost-silly little polka so appealing. The costume — purple jacket, lemon skirt, head-dress with white plume, and little socks pulled over the *pointes* to suggest boots — was attractive but different from that seen in the lithograph of Cerrito in the same dance which many must know.

The *Coppélia* suite, which proved to be a medley of dances taken from each act, was staged in a very clean and shiny fashion. It revealed another aspect of the company, and that was a brilliant flair for comedy and mime in certain characterizations that could hardly be bettered. Wiveka Ljung was a wide-eyed Swanilda with a roguish sense of humour, and she danced the *valse de la poupée*, the bolero and the jig very well. Gunnar Randin, who is an excellent mime, depicted Coppélius on the fairly familiar absent-minded lines — scanning the book only to forget just why he had crossed to Swanilda and having to return to peruse the pages again. A very pleasant and feasible piece of action, moreover, was having Coppélius himself accompany the Spanish dance with a tambourine and the jig with a little fife.

What impressed me greatly was the way in which von Rosen and Holmgren managed to capture the Bournonville style so accurately in the *pas de deux* from *The Flower Festival at Genzano*. This, which was taught to them by the Danish expert, Hans Brenaa, is known to us as interpolated in Festival Ballet's production of *Napoli*. Holmgren, although he is possibly just a little too sturdy, has good *ballon* and elevation, and thus finds the Bournonville style anything but alien to him. Elsa Marianne von Rosen, who has an instinctive grace and strong personal charm, but who may also be just a little too sophisticated, was able to make this attractive piece of choreography both innocently seductive and sparkling.

E. C. Mason.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET
at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

August
17 *The Lady and the Fool, The Burrow, Mam'zelle Angot*
18 *A Blue Rose, The Firebird, Pineapple Poll*
19 *Pineapple Poll, Rinaldo and Armida, Ballet Imperial*
20 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
21 *Mam'zelle Angot, The Burrow, The Firebird*
22 **(M)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Linden, Ashbridge)
22 **(E)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
24 *A Blue Rose, Blood Wedding, Ballet Imperial*
25 *Ballet Imperial, The Burrow, Mam'zelle Angot*
26 *Sylvia* (Nerina, Blair)
27 *Blood Wedding, Rinaldo and Armida, Pineapple Poll*
28 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
29 **(M)** *Sylvia* (Linden, Blair)
29 **(E)** *Sylvia* (Fonteyn, Somes)
31 *The Rake's Progress, Rinaldo and Armida, The Firebird*

September
1 *Les Rendezvous, Blood Wedding, Ballet Imperial*
2 *The Rake's Progress, La Belle Dame sans Merci* (1st perf. of Andrée Howard ballet with Lynn Seymour and Donald MacLeary), *Les Rendezvous*
3 *Sylvia* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
4 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
5 **(M)** *Coppélia* (Park Burne), *Façade*
5 **(E)** *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
7 *The Rake's Progress, La Belle Dame sans Merci, The Lady and the Fool*
8 *The Lady and the Fool, La Belle Dame sans Merci, Les Rendezvous*
9 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
10 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
11 *Coppélia* (Nerina, Blair), *Façade*
12 **(M)** *Coppélia* (Sibley, Usher), *Façade*
12 **(E)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
(End of joint season by the two Royal Ballet companies).

September
14 The Hippodrome, Golder's Green (2 weeks)
28 The Streaham Hill Theatre, Streatham Hill (2 weeks)

THE ROYAL BALLET (TOURING CO.)

September
14 The Grand Theatre, Leeds
21 The Theatre Royal, Newcastle
28 The Lyceum, Sheffield

October
5 The Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool
12 King's Theatre, Glasgow
19 His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen
26 King's Theatre, Edinburgh

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET
at the Royal Festival Hall, London, July 12 to September 12.

August
17 *Concerti, London Morning, Grand pas de deux, Symphony for Fun*
18 *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Markova, Skouratoff)
19 **(M & E)** *Swan Lake* Act 2, *London Morning, Grand pas de deux, Symphony for Fun*
20 *Swan Lake* Act 2, *The Witch Boy, London Morning*
21 *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Chauviré, Gilpin)
22 **(M)** *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Markova, Skouratoff)
22 **(E)** *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Fracci, Gilpin)
24 *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Grand pas de deux, Symphony for Fun*
25 *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Pas Classique* (Chauviré), *Symphony for Fun*
26 **(M)** *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Grand pas de deux, Prince Igor*
26 **(E)** *Les Sylphides* (Markova), *The Witch Boy, Bolero* 1830 (Markova), *Prince Igor*
27, 28 *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Pas Classique* (Chauviré), *Prince Igor*
29 **(M)** *Les Sylphides* (Markova), *London Morning, Variations for Four, Prince Igor*
29 **(E)** *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Variations for Four, Prince Igor*
31 *Swan Lake* Act 2 (Chauviré), *London Morning, Variations for Four, Prince Igor*

September
1, 2 *Coppélia*
3 *Concerti, Tyrolean pas de deux* (Markova, Skouratoff), *Symphony for Fun, Dying Swan* (Markova), *Graduation Ball*
4 *Swan Lake* Act 2 (Chauviré), *The Witch Boy, London Morning*
5 **(M)** *Concerti, Tyrolean pas de deux* (Markova, Skouratoff), *Symphony for Fun, Dying Swan* (Markova), *Graduation Ball*
5 **(E)** *Swan Lake* Act 2 (Chauviré), *The Witch Boy, London Morning*
7 *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Chauviré, Gilpin)
8 *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Markova, Skouratoff)
9 **(M)** *Concerti, London Morning, Grand pas de deux, Symphony for Fun*
9 **(E)** *Symphony for Fun, Giselle* (Chauviré, Dolin)
10 Tenth Anniversary Gala. Guest artists: Markova, Chauviré, Beryl Grey, Skouratoff
11 *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Etudes*
12 **(M)** *Les Sylphides, Grand pas de deux, Symphony for Fun, London Morning*
12 **(E)** *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Etudes*

BALLET RAMBERT

August
18-23 Baalbek Festival, Lebanon

October
5 The Lyceum Theatre, Newport.
19 The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton.

November
2 The Arts Theatre, Cambridge.

December
7 Theatre Royal, Nottingham

JEROME ROBBINS' BALLETS U.S.A.
at the Piccadilly Theatre, London, on Sept. 14 for one week

Programme: *Moves; N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz; The Afternoon of a Faun; The Concert*

THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
at the Empire Theatre
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Aug. 24-26 *Suite en Blanc, Variations, Balance à Trois, Balletino, Le Jeune Homme et la Mort*
Aug. 27-29 *La Création, Fugue, La Boucle, Adagio, Prélude à l'Apres-Midi d'un Faune, L'Emprise*

The National Ballet of Finland

Aug. 31-Sept. 2(E) *L'Epreuve d'Amour, Scaramouche, Don Quixote*
Sept. 2(M) *Schéhérazade, Three Pierrots, The Black Swan, Don Quixote*, Two Finnish Ballets
Sept. 3-4 *Giselle*
Sept. 5(M) *Schéhérazade, Three Pierrots, The Black Swan, Don Quixote*, Two Finnish Ballets
Sept. 5(E) *L'Epreuve d'Amour, Scaramouche, Don Quixote*

Ballets: U.S.A.

Sept. 7-12 *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz, Afternoon of a Faun, The Concert, Moves*

THE HARLEQUIN DANCE COMPANY

(for details of company see page 24)

September
14-16 Hastings

October
1 Folkestone
3 Ramsgate
7 Grimsby

BALLET EXHIBITION
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INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVALS

The following have already announced that there will be ballet in their festivals. Details to be published when available.

DUBROVNIK: July 1-Aug. Yugoslav Folklore Groups

SANTANDER: July 25-Aug. 31. Ballet of the Paris Opera, Ballet Espagnol, Coros Y Danzas, a Flamenco group from Andalusia

ATHENS: Aug. 1-Sept. 15. Martha Graham and her company in *Clytemnestra* and Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.

EDINBURGH: Aug. 23-Sept. 12. At the Empire Theatre Aug. 23-29, Les Ballets Jean Babilee. Aug. 30-Sept. 5, National Ballet of Finland. Sept 6-12, Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.

DUBLIN: Sept. 14-27. London's Festival Ballet (world première of *Full Moon for the Bride*); Lotte Goslar's Mime-Dance Company

BERLIN: Sept. 20-Oct. 6. Ballet of the Berlin State Opera in *Undine* and *Schwarze Sonne*, Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.

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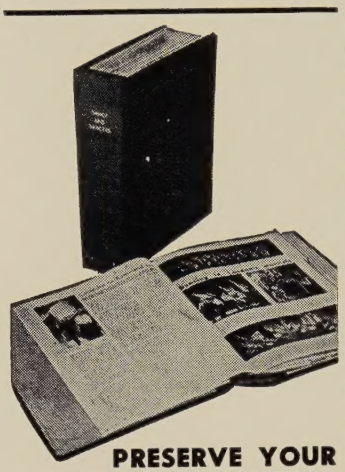

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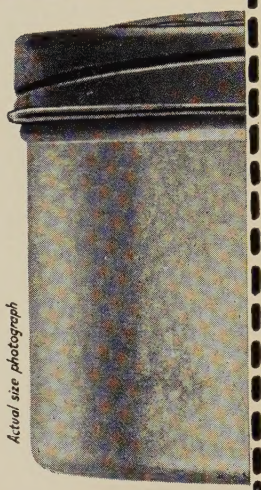

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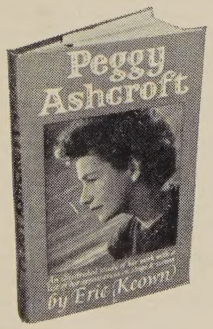

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